

LONDON SOCIETY.

JANUARY, 1885.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

No. XXX.

PLATT BROTHERS & CO. LIMITED, OF OLDHAM.

FROM a remote past there has descended to us a quaint ballad, the leading sentiment of which is expressed in the words,

" Of o' sorts o' places,
An' o' sorts o' faces,
It's Owdham, brave Owdham, for me."

This love of place has always been a strong feature of Oldham life, and has had much to do with the building up of the town's prosperity. The people of Oldham are firmly convinced that no other spot in the wide world contains so many of the true elements of greatness as their own borough, and, within certain limits, it must be confessed, they are not without warrant for that opinion. Oldham has the largest number of limited liability companies of any manufacturing town in the Kingdom ; Oldham possesses the wealthiest working-class population in the world ; Oldham owns the most extensive machine works that have ever been established anywhere. These are facts which Oldham justly prides itself upon, and thus the refrain gets handed on, and "Owdham, brave Owdham, for me" continues to be said and sung from generation to generation, and, great as the town's past has been, it looks forward with eager confidence to a future that shall be still greater. In Oldham, more perhaps than in any other place, you see evidence of a reciprocal faith and trust ; the immense army of workers which constitute its population believe in each other, help each other, co-operate with each other ; the interests of employers and employed are acknowledged to be identical ; thus, from year to year, the town goes on extending its industrial borders, increasing its material prosperity, and improving its intellectual life. True, it feels the ebbs and flows that mark the course of trade, in the textile branches, but, in spite of all fluctuations, its general record is one of steady success.

Oldham has been fortunate in having attracted to itself during the early years of the steam machinery era several men of indomitable energy and foresight—men who were able to see the

vast opportunities for development which this new power presented—men who, with strong inventive gifts of their own, could keep well abreast of the time in mechanical improvements, and who ultimately obtained for their efforts that full recognition of success which can only be bestowed when a very foremost position has been reached. Such efforts have been those which have resulted in placing the firm of Messrs. Platt Brothers & Co., of Oldham, as the first in the world in the magnitude of their operations in the production of machinery. This firm have set their mark upon Oldham in such strong lines that the stranger within its gates cannot fail to observe and be impressed by the fact. Above all the dinginess of the brick streets, the loftiness of the brick factories, the canopy of gloom created by the smoke, and the noise and bustle of the vehicular traffic, the evidences of the business activity of this firm are made manifest. On one side of the town they have an establishment at which 6,000 hands are employed ; on the other they have a concern at which about 3,000 are engaged ; the various works, exclusive of their collieries, covering an aggregate area of 55 acres, and the firm have possession of 26½ acres of land adjacent for further extensions, some of which are now in progress. In the comings and goings between these two gigantic industrial hives—in the daily sending forth of machinery from them to one part of the world and another—and in the clangour, and fire, and smoke which they give forth from morn to night—the testimony of their power is never absent.

It shall be our pleasing task to trace how this greatness had its origin ; how, step by step, it grew to its present proportions ; whose brains and hands have promoted its success ; and what the picture is that it now unfolds upon the Oldham landscape.

The founder of the firm was Mr. Henry Platt, who prior to the year 1821 was a machine maker in a humble way of business at Saddleworth. Prompted by a desire to extend his field of operations, he, in 1821, removed to Oldham, and there began to make machinery for the cotton manufacture, the first order executed by him being the construction of a carding engine for Mr. Samuel Radcliffe, the originator of the firm of Messrs. Samuel Radcliffe & Sons. While at Saddleworth Mr. Platt had concerned himself only with the making of woollen machinery, but at Oldham he found himself in the very heart of the cotton manufacture, and, with hopes equal to his ambition, he determined to make the most of the advantages of his new position. After his first cotton carding engine had been completed, he took a small workshop at Ferney Bank, where he employed five or six men, and succeeded in establishing himself so well that he found it necessary to introduce further capital into the concern, and this he did, by entering into partnership with Mr. Elijah Hibbert, a prominent engineer in the town, and the firm then took the title of Messrs. Hibbert & Platt. Success attended their conjoint enterprise, and as their operations increased they moved to larger premises, settling down, after several such removals, in the Hartford Mill, the site of the present old works, which were afterwards

built by them. From 1822 to 1837 the firm of Hibbert & Platt remained the same, but in the last-named year Mr. Platt's two sons, Joseph and John, were taken into partnership. The firm was now, "Hibbert, Platt, & Sons." So it continued until 1842, when the founder of the firm died, at the age of fifty, leaving his two sons, Joseph and John, and Mr. Hibbert, to carry forward the good work which he had started. Mr. Joseph Platt fell into delicate health after his father's death, but lingered on until the 16th of March 1845, when he died of consumption at Ventnor, at the early age of 30. Another of Mr. Henry Platt's sons, Mr. James Platt, attained his majority about this time, and became a partner, the firm being now composed of Mr. Hibbert, Mr. John Platt, and Mr. James Platt. On the 10th of March, 1846, Mr. Hibbert died, and the surviving partners carried the business on with ever-increasing success under the old style of Messrs. Hibbert, Platt, & Sons. Mr. Hibbert's interest in the concern was committed to the charge of his executors until 1854, when, according to the terms of his will, his trustees disposed of his share to Messrs. John and James Platt. At this juncture it was considered expedient, in consequence of the great growth of the business, to enlarge the partnership, and with this view Mr. William Frederick Palmer, the cashier, and Messrs. William Richardson and Mr. Edmund Hartley, the two managers, were admitted as partners. The style of the firm was now altered to Platt Brothers & Co. Mr. James Platt took an active part in the management of the concern, and also devoted much time to public affairs. For several years he was a member of the Oldham Town Council, and was the originator and most active promoter of the scheme for the purchase by the Corporation of the property of the Oldham Gas and Water Works Company, which was completed a few years before his death, and has been one of the main causes of the prosperity of the town and district. He was elected M.P. for Oldham along with the late Mr. J. M. Cobbett at the general election in 1857; but his promising career was unfortunately cut short on the 27th of August in the same year, when he was accidentally shot on the Saddleworth Moors while out shooting with a party of friends. In 1864 Mr. Eli Spencer was taken into the firm; and on the 1st January 1868 the proprietary was reconstituted as a limited liability company, in order to give a number of the heads of departments, as well as some of the principal agents of the firm at home and abroad, a direct interest in their extensive operations. From that time to the present the affairs of the company have been managed by a directorate, which is a thoroughly representative one, each director having had practical managerial experience of one or other of the departments into which this great concern is divided. Mr. John Platt was the chairman of the company, and retained in his own hands the principal portion of its interests, down to the time of his death in 1872, and when that widely-lamented event occurred, he was succeeded in the chairmanship by the gentleman who now holds that important position, Mr. S. R. Platt, his second son.

Having thus briefly outlined the managerial history of this

eminent firm, from its humble but hopeful beginning in 1821, down to the present date, embracing a period of sixty-four years of unexampled industrial activity—a period which has produced more inventions of machinery than all previous time—a period which has multiplied a hundredfold the productive power of England's looms and spindles—it will be an interesting task for us to speak more in detail of the life-work of some of the more prominent members of this famous firm.

Mr. John Platt, who for so long a term held the chief position in the firm of Platt Brothers & Co., was born on the 15th of September, 1817, being one of a family of nine children, four of whom were boys and five girls, John being the second son. John Platt was only four years of age when his father removed from Saddleworth to Oldham, and laid the foundations of the business, which has since swelled to such enormous proportions. The demands of an ever growing business, as well as the want of adequate educational facilities, prevented Mr. John Platt from receiving that scholastic training, for which his great natural abilities so admirably qualified him for taking advantage had there been the opportunity. The sound rudiments of an English education were, however, acquired by him in his boyhood at local schools, and he completed his school-life at an educational establishment at Dunham Massey. But, like all other men who have set their mark upon the world, education with him was a never-ending process, and he submitted himself to a self-culture far more important and effectual than any mere school training. His mind was early engrossed by those branches of mechanical and scientific knowledge which were necessary in the business he had to pursue, and in this direction, his attainments were of a surpassing order—solid, sure, and practical. He did not, however, confine his energies within the limits of business, but, apart from those technical and commercial matters which had the first claim upon him, his strong natural capacity, combined with rare courage and determination, caused him to explore for himself that wider field of human knowledge which was concerned with the manifold problems of existence, and social and political progress. He entered into political life almost before he had touched the period of manhood. He found himself in the midst of an agitation destined to work amazing changes and reforms in the condition of the people of England. When Lancashire was called to do battle in opposition to the Corn Laws by Gibson, Cobden, Bright and Fox, Mr. John Platt was not slow to respond, but joined their standard, and proved one of their most active lieutenants. Having once mastered the question, and thought it out for himself—having by reading and reflection brought his mind to their way of thinking—he threw himself into the struggle with all the ardour of his strong nature, and from that time to the day of his death, was to be found occupying a post of prominence in all our political and social struggles, his cause the cause of freedom and progress.

In those days, as in these, political strife was imported into social and religious questions, and matters of municipal government were made the special subject of fierce party contention. In

1847 an agitation was got up for the incorporation of Oldham, the Liberals, with whom was Mr. John Platt, ranging themselves on the side of those who desired the incorporation, and the opposite political party doing their utmost to hinder the charter from being granted. How persistently, and with what tact and ability, Mr. John Platt championed the cause of the "incorporators" is a matter of local history of which the people of Oldham are justly proud, for eventually, in 1849, the battle which had been so sturdily fought, was won, and the charter of incorporation was granted. At the ensuing election of municipal representatives, every ward in the newly-made borough was contested, Mr. John Platt being one of the candidates for the St. James's Ward. He was returned at the head of the poll. At the November elections of the same year, his brother, Mr. James Platt, was returned for the Werneth Ward. How bitterly they fought their municipal battles in those days is shewn by the following little story:—The contest was so close in the Werneth Ward that one unfortunate burgess was seized by six men belonging to each side, and so pulled and knocked about in the struggle that his coat was literally torn from his back. When the bewildered elector entered the polling booth he declared he would only vote for that side which undertook to provide him with a new garment to replace the one destroyed. It is not recorded which side accepted the condition. All that is known is that he voted.

Mr. John Platt continued to fulfil his duties in the Oldham Town Council as the representative of the St. James's Ward down to the 9th of November 1854, when he was elected Mayor. The gentleman who seconded his nomination on that occasion said that "from Mr. Platt's position in society, the large amount of property he possessed in the borough, the large number of hands he employed, and the persevering endeavours which he had made to elevate the town of Oldham, and improve the condition of the working-classes, he considered him well entitled to the highest honour that they could confer upon him." When Mr. Platt's term of office expired, in November, 1855, he was elected a second time, being the first Mayor of Oldham upon whom that mark of confidence had been bestowed. One of the leading events of his first year of office was the obtaining of parliamentary sanction to an important scheme for giving Oldham an adequate water supply. In his evidence, given before the committee of the House of Commons on that occasion, he stated that in 1837, when he first became a partner in the firm of Messrs. Hibbert, Platt & Sons, they had only 400 workmen, but at that time (1855) they had on an average 2,500 men employed. The scheme was sanctioned in its integrity. For a third time Mr. Platt was elected Mayor of Oldham in 1861.

In other public work Mr. John Platt was no less zealous. He was constantly alive to the importance of railway accommodation for Oldham. The great district scheme which was devised in 1846 had his warmest support. The Act for it was obtained, but, from various causes, principally the want of funds, the lines were never commenced. The Greenfield branch was, however, forced

on, Mr. Platt being one of the four gentlemen who compelled the London and North Western Railway Company to construct it in accordance with the terms of the Act previously obtained. Since then, the Oldham, Ashton and Guide Bridge Railway line, which again owes its existence to the energy, public spirit, and foresight of Mr. Platt, has been constructed, as well as the continuation of the Lancashire and Yorkshire line from Mumps to Rochdale and Royton. In all these plans for opening up Oldham to other parts of the world, Mr. Platt ever took a leading part. He was also for many years a director of the London and North Western Railway Company.

The cause of education always found in Mr. John Platt a zealous and intelligent worker, and a most liberal benefactor. The Oldham Lyceum, which partakes of the character of a Mechanics' Institution, but is perhaps of more comprehensive scope, owes much of its prosperity to Mr. John Platt and his brother James. In 1847 Mr. John Platt was one of the vice-presidents of the Lyceum, and took great interest in the scheme for obtaining a more commodious building in which to carry on the operations of the institution. The brothers subscribed handsomely to the building fund, and the new Lyceum was opened on the 25th September, 1856. In 1859 he gave £500 towards clearing off the debt from the institution, and offered annual sums as prizes to be competed for by students. In 1863 he proposed to the directors of the Lyceum that if they would provide a suitable building for the purpose of a School of Art, he would pay any cost in excess of receipts for carrying on such a school, and in 1864 he presented the Lyceum with the noble School of Science and Art buildings which adjoin the original structure in Union Street, the cost of which was upwards of £2,000. The firm of Platt Brothers also presented all the models and casts for the use of students of that institution. In 1865 Mr. John Platt was elected president of the Lyceum, and in 1867 he presented to its library a number of valuable scientific works, intended for reference. Mr. Platt took a deep interest in the scheme for extending Owen's College, Manchester, the firm contributing £500 to the extension, as well as £500 towards the founding of a professional chair of engineering there. In the establishment of news and reading rooms in connection with the works; in promoting the Werneth Mechanics' Institution, towards which he contributed £500, and in a hundred other ways, Mr. Platt showed how much he had at heart the education of the people. Mr. Gladstone inaugurated the new Werneth Mechanics' Institution building in 1867. Since then the firm have benefited the undertaking in various ways. They have given an annual donation of £100, besides paying the fees of all the scholars from the works, which average between £300 and £400 a year. They likewise pay the fees for all their scholars attending the Roman Catholic schools of St. Marie and St. Patrick, Oldham. It should be mentioned also that Messrs. John and James Platt gave the land for the site of St. Thomas's Church, Werneth, and when the building was completed in 1856, and it was found that the dona-

tions fell short by £1,900 of the cost of the erection, they generously made up the deficiency. Mr. John Platt afterwards kept the edifice in repair, and expended more than £1,000 additional in altering and improving the church. In all the charitable institutions in the town he evinced the most lively interest, and constantly assisted them by his benefactions, a gift of £500 to the Oldham Infirmary being one of the latest of his public donations prior to his death.

As has already been mentioned, Mr. John Platt was from early manhood an earnest politician, his sympathies being always with the more advanced section of the Liberal party. For upwards of a quarter of a century he was before the public as a politician, first coming into prominence at the time of the Oldham election of 1847, when there was a severe contest in the borough. Mr. John Fielden, of Todmorden, who had up to that time commanded the support of the Oldham Radicals, had determined to force Mr. J. M. Cobbett into the position of his colleague, and, as the latter was held to be unsound on many points, the Liberal party declined to accept Mr. Fielden's dictation in the matter and brought out Mr. Fox, and the Tories brought out Mr. Duncuft. The struggle was a fierce one, and excited the strongest party feeling. Mr. John Platt acted as chairman of the Radical Committee, and there is no doubt his intelligent advocacy and admirable tact contributed in a large degree to the success which his party achieved on that occasion. When the numbers were declared at the close of the poll the votes recorded were—for Fox 725, Duncuft 694, Cobbett 624, and Fielden 612. From that time down to the year 1857 Mr. John Platt retained the position of chairman of the Oldham Liberals, and did much useful political work while acting in that capacity. He was often solicited to allow himself to be nominated a candidate for parliamentary honours, but until 1865 he declined to come forward. In that year, however, the pressure that was brought to bear upon him was too strong for him to resist, so he came out along with Mr. Hibbert, and was returned with that gentleman, the numbers being—Hibbert 1,105, Platt 1,076, Cobbett 898, Spinks 846. At the general election of 1868 the same four candidates stood a contest, with the result that Mr. Hibbert and Mr. Platt were again returned. Mr. Platt continued to represent Oldham in Parliament down to the time of his death, and always commanded the confidence and respect of his constituents; even those who were opposed to him in political thought could not but allow that in all public matters he brought to bear an enlightened perception and a strong sense of justice and right. No one had a word to say in disparagement of him, for he was so honest and sincere in his political action, and so firm and unflinching in his convictions, that his opponents could not withhold their admiration of his straightforwardness. He did not claim to be an orator; indeed, he did not do his natural power of speech justice, being at all times reluctant to address an audience; but on the few occasions when he was prompted to throw off his reserve and was prevailed

upon to express himself upon questions which were agitating the public mind, he spoke with an ability and an earnestness which secured him respectful attention. In the House of Commons he seldom made any lengthy speech, but in committee work his extensive knowledge of industrial matters was of great service. When at home in Oldham, amongst his own townsmen, feeling the encouraging influence of their genial approbation, he frequently grew eloquent while on the platform, and expressed his views and opinions with a facility which elicited general admiration. The last speech delivered by Mr. Platt to his constituents was on the 31st of January, 1872, when he spoke upon the labour question at some length, his address showing a complete mastery of the subject and a deep desire to look from the workers' standpoint as well as from that of the capitalist. He urged his hearers never to forget, above all, that England had a magnificent industry to uphold, and that it was our first duty to see that that did not suffer. The nine hours movement had then, as far as regarded engineers and machinists, become an accomplished fact. It had begun in a very small way at Newcastle, and from there had rapidly extended all over the country. The rapidity with which the movement had spread showed to him that there was a feeling in the minds of the people that the time had come when the nine hours limit could be safely conceded. Such questions must always be settled to a great extent by mutual agreement. It was neither good for the operative nor good for the employer that when a demand was made it should be immediately accepted or rejected. It wanted to be looked at all round, for it was quite possible that in acceding to the demands the industry we had worked so hard to get might be imperilled, while, on the other hand, it was not advisable for the masters to completely and at once resist any demand that might be pressed upon them; it was due to the employed that the question should be fully and carefully examined, and if the masters should be of opinion that they were being asked to do something unreasonable, then both sides ought to meet together and settle the matter by fair argument. He recognised the strength and importance of trades unions, and felt that when once a workman had joined one of these associations he could not afterwards act individually. It was no matter how well a person might be treated by any master or employer, or however good the system might be in his workshop, if an order went forth from the trades union he was bound to obey, and for obeying the orders of his society he received, as a matter of right, the whole protection of his fellow members. It was almost impossible for any single employer of labour to resist a combination existing amongst his workmen, and he did not see any objection, nor had he ever seen any objection, to a body of employers meeting a body of the representatives of working men, and when any demand was made, either on one side or the other, that it should be fairly discussed across the table, and the arguments on both sides listened to. Then, if the masters were able to prove that to grant the demand of their work-

people would be to jeopardise our commercial supremacy, he was quite sure the reasonableness of the employed would at once cause them to give way. He thought that employers and employed should never be placed in antagonism to each other. They were both anxious to preserve the industry of the country, and he was quite willing, for his part, that the workmen should have their fair share of the profits of that industry. He thought, too, that there was a means other than that of trades unionism by which that might be brought about. They had a system in existence in that town, he reminded them, which was spreading rapidly throughout England, and that was the system of co-operation. He had always been one of the strongest advocates of that system, and he could not lose sight of the fact that there was a certain amount of antagonism between trades unionism and co-operation. Still, there were lessons to be gathered from each, and it was for them to put into practical application the highest principles of right and justice to secure to themselves the greatest possible amount of prosperity. He advised both masters and men to do all they could, consistently with what was due to each other, to uphold the trade of that district, because by that alone did their prosperity exist, and by that alone could they continue to be a great and flourishing community.

It was in such speeches as these, in which his strong love of right was made so manifest, that Mr. John Platt gained so powerful a hold upon the affections of the people. Only the year previous to his death (1871) an address was presented to him by the working classes of Oldham, the occasion being celebrated by a popular demonstration in which the greatest enthusiasm was displayed. The address contained over 8,000 signatures, and the presentation was made in the Oldham Co-operative Hall. The following extract from the address may be regarded as succinctly expressing the claims of Mr. Platt to some signal recognition at the hands of the people of Oldham :—“ We cannot look upon the noble institutions in this town which you have either been the means of establishing, or to whose development and completion you have largely contributed, without feeling how much the earnest friends of popular education have to thank you for your generous and sympathetic responses to all applications for aid to educational schemes ; no matter by whom initiated and irrespective of either sect or party ; by these things you have shown to us the true catholicity of your mind, and the universal charity of your heart. * * * We attach no little importance to the many material advantages which the people of Oldham and its neighbourhood of all ranks and conditions have derived from your great commercial enterprise and your business capacity. They have provided employment and wages for thousands of our industrious people ; they have created business for our tradesmen ; they have enhanced the value of the lands and other properties of our richer neighbours, and have been the means of bringing and diffusing amongst us a stream of wealth which under other circumstances would, if circulated at all, have been

so in other towns, and a great deal of it, no doubt, in other countries. We are aware of the great self-sacrifice involved when a man in such a position as yours, with so many cares and heavy responsibilities, abstracts from his own affairs the time and thought which a useful public career demands."

On the 29th of February, 1872, Mr. John Platt, accompanied by his wife, a daughter, and a niece, left England for the Continent, with the intention of enjoying a brief sojourn in Italy, his health having been for some time previous in an unsatisfactory condition. While at Florence Mr. Platt was taken worse, and on proceeding further south, to Naples, alarming symptoms set in, and it was considered advisable that he should return home with all possible speed. He reached Paris on the 12th of May, 1872, and could get no further, but was there placed under the medical care of two eminent physicians. Their skill could afford no relief, and a few days later he died at Maurice's Hotel. His remains were conveyed to England, and he was buried at Oldham amidst the sorrowing regrets of the whole population.

A local paper of that period—the *Oldham Chronicle*, to which we are indebted for some of the foregoing particulars—says:—"Amongst the many public measures which Mr. Platt helped forward, his assistance to Mr. Cobden when engaged in negotiating the French Treaty may be referred to. There can be no doubt that his vast commercial knowledge, and his position at the head of the largest machine-making firm in the world, were of very great service in arranging the details of the Treaty, and Mr. Platt was fully justified in looking back upon that portion of his public service with considerable pride and satisfaction. While occupying the position of parliamentary representative for Oldham, he consistently spoke and voted in favour of every great Liberal measure, having for its object the welfare of the country at large. Locally, in addition to the honours conferred upon him as chief magistrate for three years, he was in the commission of the peace for the counties of Lancaster and Carnarvon, and in 1866 was appointed deputy-lieutenant for Lancashire. He was also deputy-lieutenant for Carnarvon, and some years ago held the office of high sheriff for that county. He was a member of the Oldham borough bench from its formation, and for a considerable time the chairman of the Oldham, Ashton and Guide Bridge Railway Company. In every capacity and sphere he did his duty manfully and nobly, and we may well say, with the assent of the entire community of Oldham, 'We ne'er shall look upon his like again.'"

A few years later, in 1878, a statue was erected in Oldham to the memory of Mr. John Platt, and stands there to-day, one of the most treasured objects in the town. It was erected by public subscription at a cost of between £3,000 and £4,000, the statue being designed by Mr. T. W. Stevenson, of Edinburgh. The inscription on the pedestal bears but a few simple words of record. The statue was unveiled in September, 1878, in the presence of 50,000 people, who gathered there to do honour to the memory of one who had well deserved the recognition.

As an instance of the commercial sagacity which has all along attended the management of the great industrial enterprise over whose fortunes Mr. John Platt so long and so ably presided, it is only necessary to refer to what the firm did during the time of the Cotton Famine, when Lancashire generally was rendered helpless and wretched. At that time the attention of the firm was directed more especially to the adaptation of the machinery then in operation to the working of East Indian and other short-stapled cotton, which had previously been used only to a limited extent, and for what are known as "low numbers" of yarn. Success attended their efforts in this direction, and the advantage to Oldham and the surrounding district was so great and so immediate that there was an increase of spindles of about 500,000 there during the time when other towns were plunged into the very depths of distress. In fact, the presence of difficulties spurred Messrs. Platt to greater exertions, and finding that the ordinary cotton trade, on which they had hitherto chiefly relied for their orders, was failing them, they set themselves to make up for the deficiency in other quarters. Thus it was that they came to extend their production of machinery for the woollen and worsted industries, the latter being a "new line" altogether for them. How well they succeeded is evidenced by the fact that to-day not only do they stand pre-eminent as makers of cotton machinery, the trade in which returned to them with two-fold vigour when the Cotton Famine came to an end, but they stand almost in the same position in regard to the construction of woollen and worsted machinery. Thus, they take in almost the entire field of textile work in this country, while on the Continent of Europe, in North and South America, Mexico, Egypt and the Levant, in India, China and Japan—wherever, in fact, machinery for combing, spinning, or weaving is required—their machines are in active working.

The firm has always been progressive. Each year sees its operations extended. The old spirit still survives, although the reins of management are distributed amongst a greater number of persons than was the case during the ante-company period. Fortunately, the directors are all gentlemen who have grown into their positions, as it were, and who fulfil their several managerial functions with never-failing regularity. One department dovetails perfectly with another, and the great work of machinery making proceeds in an even, uninterrupted course, from year end to year end, while all the time the outlook over the whole extent of the world of machinery is carefully scanned, no opportunity being lost of keeping Messrs. Platt Brothers & Co. in direct communication with every market. At one time it was hinted to Mr. John Platt that the concern of which he was the head had touched the summit of success, and that it was not desirable, even if possible, to extend their operations any further. Mr. Platt replied with characteristic calmness: "No doubt the undertaking is gigantic, and it is immense the number of people dependent, more or less, on one establishment. But I can say this, that so long as I am supported by my present partners with the ability they display

and have displayed in the manufacturing of machines, and also by the workmen with whom I am surrounded, I feel no hesitation whatever in hoisting the banner of progress; and I am quite certain that, with the talent and ability I have around me, we shall overcome every obstacle." It is well known that this anticipation has been fully realized.

Mr. Samuel Radcliffe Platt, the present chairman of the company, is the second son of the late Mr. John Platt, M.P., who left thirteen children, seven sons and six daughters. Born and nurtured in Oldham, introduced to the Hartford Works in early manhood, and having by practical experience as well as inheritance made good his claim to the honourable position he now holds, Mr. S. R. Platt may be considered to stand very much in the same position as that occupied by his late father. First and foremost, he is a man of business; after that he is, in an unambitious sort of way, a public man; and then, he is a man who attends to the enjoyments of himself and his family circle in a manner that is at once rational, refined, and artistic. His business instincts are solid and worthy of the name he bears, and his tastes, apart from business, are those of a large-hearted, healthy-minded English gentleman. Honours would have been crowded thick upon him had he cared for them, but his inclinations have not been in that direction; he is on the commission of the peace, and has done good work as a member of the Oldham Town Council, but beyond that point he has not hitherto allowed his ambition to carry him. The pleasure that gives him the most delight, and is most in harmony with his nature, is that of yachting. His yacht, the *Norseman*, has conveyed him over many seas, and taken him within sight of many impressive scenes. On board the *Norseman* he has contemplated the midnight sun, and made himself familiar with the glorious fjords of Norway; on board the *Norseman* he has sailed into tropical regions, where, amidst burning heat and dazzling sunlight, he has seemed to touch the shores of fairyland; but, wherever he has been, however distant from his native land, he has never forgotten the busy hive of industry which he has left behind him at Oldham. Mr. S. R. Platt is a keen lover of music, and does much for the promotion of that art. He has a private band of some fifty performers, selected from our leading orchestras, to play for him and his guests once a week at his mansion in Werneth Park, and to all musical movements in Oldham or Manchester he lends a generous support. On the occasion of his marriage, in May last, Oldham was very demonstrative in its desire to do him honour; addresses were presented to him; banquets were given; and, one way and another, the town got through an amount of rejoicing that constituted a very high compliment to the bridegroom. Amongst the many expressions of admiration and good feeling which this event called forth, it was stated that "no man could with adequacy of enjoyment to himself devote himself entirely to material conquests, least of all has Mr. Platt. With much of the care and responsibility of a gigantic industrial establishment on his mind—a king, as it were, with so many satraps and

captains with whom to consult and share the government of a community which rivals in numbers the subjects of a German princeling—he has yet found leisure to promote the musical cultivation of himself and of his neighbours. His wealth and social position could easily have made him forgetful of these things; but, like a true citizen, and ever keeping before him the fact that *noblesse oblige* holds good in every rank in life, he has acted the better part, and, shunning those pleasures which almost unbounded affluence could give, he has cast his lot with the people. Mr. Platt is a man of the people. He is of true English grit—one of those components that are the backbone of English nationality. He may not lay claim to great and striking gifts, but he possesses that which is a surer balance through life—sound common sense, a capacity to understand popular needs, and an aptitude for seeing the practical and useful, and making it subservient to some good purpose. But it is not alone as a man of business that Mr. Platt seeks to take his stand and be judged by his fellows. He is a patron of the arts, and his choir is a living instance of what may be done by a gentleman of ample means in guiding and stimulating the more elevated tastes of the people.⁵ To have deserved such warm eulogies as were passed on Mr. R. S. Platt at the time to which we refer is a great deal, but to have obtained them is still more. One who had long been associated with Mr. Platt in the direction of the Hartford Works, Mr. Joseph Palmer, observed, at a public presentation to Mr. and Mrs. R. S. Platt, “that Mr. Platt, when a young man, was never ashamed or afraid to soil his hands or to work in the works, so that he was getting practical knowledge, which has served to fit him for the position he now occupies. He has gone through all the branches of skilled labour, from the wood patterns to the finished article. He has worked at the bench as a joiner, in the sand as a moulder, at the anvil as a smith, at the vice as a fitter, and in the mill to erect and set to work the different machines when completed. I do not think he has forgotten any of the old faces with whom he worked when young, and that he was then, and still is, grateful for the many practical lessons he received from them when studying for a mechanical engineer.” Mr. Platt, in acknowledging this reference to his days in the workshop, said:—“I have been for twelve years chairman of the board of directors, since the lamented death of my father, Mr. John Platt, and I may say that nothing has ever given me greater pleasure than the passing of the few years of my life at work amongst you—labouring at the same daily toil with you yourselves, and fulfilling the same duties. In that work I gained an insight into your characters, and into the character of the work. This has been the best means of my education, and of my achieving whatever success I have gained since then. It has been a labour of love with me, and the best days I have spent have been in the workshop.” These words are sufficient in themselves to show the force of character possessed by the gentleman now at the head of this celebrated firm. The same spirit prevails in the management all through. All the directors

are workers; all have obtained their experience in the workshop; all are as well acquainted with the practice as with the theory of their business. In 1875 the Oldham Science and Art School became too small to accommodate the number of students attending the classes; Mr. Henry Platt, Mr. S. R. Platt, Mr. Fred Platt, Mr. Joseph A. Platt, Mr. John H. Platt, Mr. James E. Platt, and Mr. Sydney Platt, sons of the late Mr. Platt, decided to pull down the building and rebuild it on a scale of sufficient magnitude to meet the requirements of the town for many years to come, as a tribute to his memory, and so as to make the school what Mr. Platt intended it to be. The present handsome building shews how well that intention has been carried out.

We will now attempt to give a brief description of the immense machine works conducted by this firm. As we have said before, the works are 55 acres in extent, exclusive of the collieries, and the firm employ between 8,000 and 9,000 hands.

The new Hartford Works at Werneth are the largest in extent. At these works 6,000 people are employed, and it is one of the sights of the town to see this immense body of toilers at noon-time or night, pouring out in so many living streams from all the avenues of egress the place contains. It is a sight never to be forgotten. The evidence of their employment is upon them, for contact with iron is not exactly conducive to cleanliness of appearance; but they are a hardy, stalwart, healthy race for the most part, not by any means bent and haggard with toil, but representatives in the best sense of that dignity of labour which the results of modern enterprise have taught us to respect and admire. As we watch the thousands of workers emerging from the works at all points, we get an idea of the vast extent of the establishment. The main building is of brick, and merely to travel round its external boundaries is a task of no little difficulty, never to name the amount of walking that you must do if you explore the mysteries of the interior, with its wondrous succession of foundries, machine-rooms and workshops. This gigantic machinery farm of innumerable acres, revealing miles of flooring, thousands of machines in all stages of construction, and an army of machinists such as no other machinery concern in the world can shew, is calculated to inspire one with astonishment and almost awe, and to attempt to give a detailed description of the place would be to enter upon a labour that would require months of application and could only be adequately performed by producing a voluminous work. Then, away from the machinery works proper, there are numerous supplementary establishments—timber yards, saw mills, forges, brick yards, and what not—constituting altogether an industrial colony of great magnitude.

We will, to begin with, take a brief glance at these "outside" places. The brick works are in active operation. On land purchased by the firm many years ago a valuable seam of clay was found, and, ever ready to turn to advantage any fresh opportunity that might arise, they at once entered upon the manufacture of bricks from this clay by steam power, and have from that time to this continued to make these articles, adding improvements from

year to year, until now they have one of the most perfect establishments of the kind in existence, and supply bricks to the building trade in all parts of the northern counties. The collieries owned by the firm are too far away to be within easy visiting distance, so we content ourselves with such particulars as we are able to glean concerning them. They are situated at Moston, near Manchester, and at Milnrow, near Rochdale, and yield for the Hartford Works alone 36,000 tons of coal per annum, while a large quantity is allowed to go to other consumers, the mineral being of such excellent quality as to cause it to be in considerable demand. At Moston the company are working three seams of coal of various qualities, the present output being 2,000 tons per week. Arrangements are in progress for considerably increasing this output. The Moston coal takes a good position in the market as a house coal, both best and seconds, while for furnace purposes and brick-burning it is all that can be desired. The fine slack which is left after screening "nuts" is washed by means of an effective apparatus, and is much sought after. The Moston coalfield is heavily watered; but this drawback is overcome by very powerful pumping machinery. The shale is made into bricks, and both at Moston and at Oldham they make about a quarter of a million bricks per week, including the close-fire, open-fire, machine-pressed qualities, and the ordinary fire bricks and blocks. The other collieries, the Brushes Clough, Butterworth Hall, and Jubilee Collieries, are the coking seams known as the Mountain Mine or three-quarter mine, one coal averaging a little over 18 inches in thickness, and being of excellent quality for either domestic or coking purposes. The company have three winding shafts at Tunshill, Butterworth Hall, and Jubilee respectively, and they get about 20 statute acres of coal per year in this district. This field, like that at Moston, is heavily watered, and the pumping plant at four stations is of an interesting character. The firm have ninety ovens for making furnace coke, which is considered equal to Durham quality, and also coke setts for burning soft coke for smithy use. At the Brushes Clough Colliery a very powerful apparatus for washing slack for coking is in operation, taking out all the shale and dust from the small coal. At this place they also get fire-clay for making fire-bricks, &c. which stand an enormous heat. They have also a sand-grinding mill, where they provide the sand required for their foundries. The Ganisko sand is the most important, being ground from a white rock containing a large quantity of silica, which is chiefly used for the lining of cupolas. Lines of rails extend from the several collieries to the Hartford Works, and trains of coal waggons, drawn by locomotives, are constantly to be seen passing to and fro. It ought to be mentioned also that the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway line runs direct into the works, and connects the new establishment with the old one, the distance between them being nearly two miles. The firm obtained a special Act of Parliament by which they were granted the privilege of despatching two trains a day each way, between the two works, but this has been found insufficient, and frequently a third train has to be added. About sixty railway

waggons are engaged in this traffic alone, besides the necessary engines. The railway facilities enjoyed by Messrs. Platt Brothers & Co. are now all that could be desired; they are in direct connection with the entire railway system of the country, and are able to despatch their machines to any point with the utmost rapidity. It is interesting to watch the loading and unloading that is for ever going on, and to observe how differently the machinery is packed for different countries.

The timber-yard is of great extent, and contains huge piles of wood and solid blocks of timber from far-off countries, stored up for future use, and undergoing that necessary process of seasoning by wind and weather, without which it would be impossible to provide wood of sufficient reliability and strength. The Waney pine timber is principally grown in the State of Michigan, and is shipped from Quebec. About 300,000 cubic feet per annum of this timber is cut up by the company for their own requirements in machine making, together with 20,000 feet of Honduras mahogany and cedar wood. The origin and age of each block of timber is duly recorded, so that there is no danger of any wood being used which time and weather has not set the seal of efficiency upon. Large hydraulic travelling cranes are to be seen in various parts of the yard, and in the lifting and conveying of timber blocks to the saws or elsewhere they are of incalculable service. The saw-mills cover eight acres, and scores of steam-saws are there to be seen daily at work reducing the immense logs of cedar and oak to proper proportions, the noise that they make being perfectly deafening. The sawing machinery, which is nearly all of the firm's own make, is driven by a compound horizontal steam-engine of 400 horsepower, which is worked in a handsome building adjoining. The steam is supplied by a stack of three boilers. In connection with the saw-mills there are rooms in which all the operations of wood-turning and joinering are carried on by the aid of the most improved appliances. Then there are the drying-rooms, fitted up with stoves, heated by steam, the building being constructed on fire-proof principles. The firm keep on an average not less than 400,000 cubic feet of timber "steered" in the yard, besides an immense quantity of wood in logs. The saw-mills and timber-yard are lighted by electricity, by means of sixteen 2,000 candle Brush electric lamps, the dynamo in connection with the apparatus being kept in the engine-house. As much as 350,000 cubic feet of timber can be turned out of these saw-mills in the course of a twelvemonth.

Some distance from the saw-mills we come to the Forge, where all the malleable iron used by the firm is produced. The surrounding ground is occupied with piles of pig-iron ready to be carried forward to the furnaces. Entering the Forge we find a number of furnaces in full blaze, and see men at work manipulating the molten metal, forming it first into unshapely balls, and afterwards, by the aid of the steam-hammer, reducing it to shape and consistency. The iron comes to Messrs. Platt & Co. in its original "pig" form, fresh from the smelters, and such portions

as are required for the framework and gearing of the machines is transferred direct to the cupolas connected with the foundries, but the remainder, which is used for constructing the tougher and more elastic pieces of machinery is brought to the forge and there undergoes the various processes of refining and hardening. To free the metal from the excess of carbon which it contains when it comes from the blast furnace it is "puddled :" that is, a mass of metal is exposed to intense heat in the furnace, and while in a state of fusion the "puddler" manipulates it with a long rake, submitting it to the action of the oxygen which passes over it from the fire. As this process approaches completion, the "puddler" collects the white hot metal into balls of twelve or fifteen inches in diameter; these are removed from the furnace and placed beneath a powerful steam hammer, the successive blows from which knit it together and impart to it the necessary elasticity. When the ball of semi-boiling matter has been hammered into an oblong block, it is then passed between a succession of iron rollers and elongated into what are termed "puddle-bars." These bars are again cut up into short lengths, piled together, and mixed with scraps of old malleable iron ; it is then once more heated in the furnace and submitted a second time to the hammering process. When it leaves the steam-hammer at this stage, it is reheated and put through another series of rollers, until finally the bar is reduced to the shape or size required, or it may, if necessary, be reduced by a similar process to sheets or plates. There are many furnaces, many steam-hammers, and many sets of rollers constantly engaged in these operations, and all the place seems alive with fire and flame, the red-hot splinters flying hither and thither under each blow of the steam-hammer, rendering it necessary for the men to guard their faces by means of iron masks. When cool, the malleable iron is placed on the railway waggons and taken, by the assistance of a locomotive, into the smiths', turning, and fitting shops.

Proceeding now to the Hartford New works, we are first introduced to the pattern room, where men are busily engaged in making the various patterns used in the formation of moulds for castings ; and following these to the places where they are being brought into use, we find ourselves in the midst of a scene of dust, heat, and din that could hardly be paralleled. There are no fewer than five large foundries, each devoted to its own particular work, and all as busy as they can be. Men are to be seen walking about with vessels of boiling metal, suspended between a couple of long poles ; they stop here and there to pour their molten burden into such moulds as have been made ready for the casting process, and the bubbling metal spreads itself amongst the leaden earth like burning water, until all the interstices are filled, and nothing remains to be done but to wait for it to cool into the shape and consistency required. In this department, the men seem to be almost of the colour of the mould in which they work, and it is only when the light flashes here and there, that their faces can be clearly discerned. These foundries contain a number of cupolas, and produce on an average 460 tons of castings a week, the larger

proportion of them being very light. Many moulding machines are used, and these can be managed by boys, thus securing not only a saving of labour cost, but a greater perfection of casting than could be obtained by hand-work. The more special machinery castings, however, are produced by skilled moulders who bestow great pains upon the shaping of the different objects. Wheels and pulleys are moulded in hundreds every day. The cast-iron boxes and covers for the moulds for the heavier castings, are all lifted and carried from one part of the moulding shop to another, by means of powerful hydraulic cranes, each of which is managed by a boy, who, by the aid of a lever, controls the motions of the lift. But all this portion of the Hartford New Works seems enveloped in a grey mist, and has a weird appearance altogether, suggesting a modified Inferno.

Moving forward a stage, we reach the core drying stoves; then we go on to the casting dressing shops, which are also of great extent. Many of the smaller castings are dressed by machinery; indeed, it may be taken for granted that in all cases where a machine can improve upon hand labour, Messrs. Platt & Co. will have such a machine in operation. We are next introduced to what are called the Roller Turning Departments. There is a top-roller and there is a bottom-roller department. Top rollers are made of cast metal, while bottom-rollers are of wrought iron and steel. This department is one of great extent. While wandering through its many rooms, we see hundreds of lathes and other machine tools at work, with as many workmen as there are machines, or more; and such a whirring, buzzing noise assails our ears as almost deprives us of the power of speech. Overhead there is a complete forest of belting, whirling round at a speed that takes one's breath away. The boring machines are to be observed running their drills through the centre of the rollers with unceasing regularity and precision, never deviating a hair's breadth from the line set down for them to travel. Then in connection with the bottom-rollers, there are the fluting machines, which are, perhaps, still more wonderful in their mechanical power. A large proportion of these rollers, are subsequently case-hardened, and this represents a comparatively recent improvement introduced by Messrs. Platt & Co., and one that the spinning trade is likely to appreciate and benefit by. There is no waste space in all these rooms, the lathes and benches are placed as near each other as comfort and convenience will admit of, and in the division of labour, the highest possible economy is exercised. Some men have been for the best part of their lives engaged on just one little branch of work—it may be turning a screw, fixing a bolt, boring a centre, or filing a wheel—and from the 1st of January to the 31st of December, year after year, he will go on repeating that one small operation, until he gets to do it almost mechanically. There can be no doubt as to the monotony of this kind of service; nor can there be any doubt as to the general economy of the system, for the man who has only one thing to do, will, in the nature of things, do it much more rapidly and correctly than the one who merely tries the work now and again. It is said that

Messrs. Platt & Co. have men in their employment who have never deviated from one particular little bit of service for forty years ; still they are not unhappy, for the work is easy, and the remuneration good, and as a rule, the ordinary British workman is well satisfied with such a condition of things. Referring once more to the roller-making, however, it is stated that the firm produces as many as 10,000 lengths of fluted rollers per week.

The grinding shops next command attention. Here we see long rows of grindstones revolving with lightning rapidity, the grinders or glaziers sitting on swing seats, pressing portions of machinery upon the stones, from which streams of red and blue flame are wildly rushing. The men appear to be riding furiously into space on imaginary steeds, only they never get any further, for the wheels go on whizzing, and the fire goes on flying, and they remain just where they were. This work not only seems hard but dangerous, for the castings break sometimes, and now and then a stone becomes worn until it is liable to throw up obstructions that may have the effect of removing the rider from his seat.

It is something of a relief to escape from this room to the smith's forge, where the glow of the fires, and the clang of the hammers on the anvils greet you. It would seem that, with all our acknowledged improvements, in the manipulation of iron, there are still some special things that remain to be done by the hand of the smith as in the days of old. Still, we find that Messrs. Platt & Co., employ a large variety of stamping and forging machinery, giving mechanical aid wherever it is possible. All the bar and other malleable iron used here is the product of the Hartford Forge.

From this point we proceed to a large room containing nearly 400 lathes and boring machines, mostly self-acting. The room is 220 feet long, and 70 feet wide, and is devoted entirely to the treatment of cast-iron portions of machinery. Other rooms of equal dimensions are given up to the turning and finishing of wrought-iron pieces, such as shafting, studs, screws, and the like. Then there are rooms for other distinctive work, making altogether at this point, a ground of labour concentration marvellous to look upon. From thirty to forty tons of finished shafting are turned out every week. One variety of shafting produced is dealt with by a series of ingeniously contrived machines, from which it emerges, without being turned, in a perfectly "true" condition, and with a fine smooth surface which admirably adapts it for the special purposes for which it is designed. It may be mentioned that the firm employ altogether 2,200 lathes, together with a proportionate number of planing machines, slotting and drilling machines, grinding and glazing tools, file-cutting machines &c.

The millwrights' shop and its immediate surroundings have thus been described by a machinery trade journal :—The millwrights' shop is well supplied with planing and other machine tools, and there the millwright work is accomplished, and in the repairing shops, &c., where they have an efficient staff of mechanics, the firm do all their own repairing. Then there are the loom-shops. Here the loom-frames from the foundry are

planed, drilled, and otherwise manipulated, prior to being fitted together, which is also done in this shop. All the joints of the looms are planed, and when fitted can hardly be distinguished. When fitted complete, the looms are painted, and then taken to pieces, tallowed, and packed for despatch, the trucks to receive them coming alongside. Incidentally, we may here remark, that the packing-case shops constitute by themselves a large concern. They are fitted with a full complement of wood-working machinery, and an enormous quantity of deals are cut up, and metamorphosed into packing-cases in this department in the course of a year. The carriage department, where the carriages for the "mules" and twiners are produced, comprise a number of long and spacious workshops, fitted with, for the most part, special sawing, boring, tenoning, jointing, and other automatic wood-working machinery, including some of the most cleverly contrived labour-saving appliances ever seen applied to the manipulation of wood. The various processes are accomplished with extraordinary rapidity. Elsewhere, the iron, brass, and other carriage mountings, are prepared and fitted to the carriages, which in another shop are finished, painted, packed, and lowered through hatchways on to trucks below ready to receive them. Looking in at another department, we find the wooden lathes for looms being finished ready for fitting to the looms, and next we are shown over the "mule" shops. Here the self-acting "mules" are produced, the frame-work and other castings from the foundry being prepared in one shop, and the wrought-iron portions in another, preparatory to their being fitted together in a third shop, one side of which is monopolised by the roller-beam portions, and the other by the headstocks. The immense block of shops in which the work of this department is carried on is 363 feet long, and contains some hundreds of special boring, sawing, planing, and other machine tools, being also supplied with lifts and other appliances. The special machinery in this, as indeed in almost every other department, has, for the most part, been invented and manufactured by the firm to suit their own requirements. Forming a portion of this series of shops are store-rooms and packing-floors, the packing being conducted on galleries fitted with weighing machines, and appliances for lowering the cases to the trucks in waiting below. The "speed" department is also an extensive one, and there are rooms and shops, including the case-hardening shops, the brass-foundry and brass-fitting shops, the ring-spinning and doubling machine rooms, and the drawing offices.

The general offices of the company are in connection with the Hartford New Works, and form a very commodious suite of rooms. Over a hundred clerks are employed in the offices.

It ought to be mentioned that at the Werneth Spindle Works, which are some little distance from the chief establishment, Messrs. Platt & Co. keep about 1,100 workpeople employed in spindle and "fly" making, tin and copper working, and bolt-screw producing. The output of spindles at this branch establishment averages 40,000 a week, and that of bolts and screws 1,000 gross.

The Hartford Old Works, situated at the other side of the town, as we have before mentioned, would in themselves form a fitting subject for a descriptive article, looking to the great extent of ground they cover, the immense amount of machinery turned out there, and the large number of workpeople (over 2,000) they provide labour for. Seeing, however, that the Old Works are, in the main, engaged in the production of similar machinery to that which is made at the New Works, and that the same healthy conditions of working, the same system of management, and the same unity of purpose prevail, it is not necessary that we should do more than make this passing reference to them. Mr. W. Richardson has charge of these works.

It is estimated that the firm pay about £10,000 a week in wages, and their works consume every year an average of 36,000 tons of coal, 12,000 tons of coke, 35,000 tons of iron, and 300,000 cubic feet of timber. And while we are on the subject of statistics, it will be of interest to mention that the total steam power used at the Hartford New Works is 8,000 horse-power; that 30 window-cleaners have constant employment the year round keeping the glass free to the access of light; and that 30 men are engaged in "sweeping-up." Messrs. Platt & Co. have left nothing undone in the way of rendering their works complete in every department. They have been thorough in all that they have attempted, and have always kept up that personal intercourse with their workpeople which tends so much to produce good feeling between employers and employed.

Since the Exhibition of 1851, which did so much to open the eyes of other nations to what England was doing in the direction of the production of machinery, there has not been a gathering of the kind at which the machines of Messrs. Platt & Co. have not held a foremost position. They have received medals without end. At Paris, Vienna, Moscow, Naples, Philadelphia, London, and all other places where machinery has been exhibited, their ingenious inventions have commanded the attention of the manufacturing world, and to-day there is not a centre of industry in existence that does not know and use Messrs. Platt & Co.'s machines. One secret of the firm's success has been the complete organisation that has always prevailed in every part of the concern. The manager of each division has a share in the profits produced by his own department, so that an interested supervision is obtained at all points. As has been well said by one who holds a prominent position at the Hartford New Works:—"Platt & Co.'s works form a chain of hundreds of links, each one of which must bear its own burden and strain, so as not to let down the rest. Their organisation, like their machines, works safely and correctly."

The present directors of the firm are: Mr. S. R. Platt (chairman), who has the general oversight of all the works, and has been twenty-three years connected with the firm; Mr. W. Richardson (vice-chairman), who has the management of the Hartford Old Works, the forge, the brickworks, and the various collieries, and has had a length of service altogether of fifty

years ; Mr. W. F. Palmer, financial director and general adviser, who has had forty-one years' service ; Mr. George Little, who is employed in the direction of the Hartford New Works and Werneth spindle works, foundries, smiths' shop, saw mills, tools, engines, and boilers, and has served forty years ; Mr. John Dodd, who has the management of the constructive and finishing departments of the New Works, and has been engaged there thirty-three years ; and Mr. John W. Nuttall, who has the control of the commercial department, and has a service record of thirty-one years. The secretary of the company is Mr. John Wynne, who has held the position since the incorporation of the firm as a limited company in 1868, and was previously associated with Mr. Palmer in the financial department for nine years. It may be questioned whether any other large limited company could show an aggregate length of service of directors equal to the above.

A few words regarding the special work upon which Messrs. Platt & Co. are engaged are due in conclusion.

The factory system, with its division of labour and the application of steam power to the driving of machinery, had been introduced into the cotton trade prior to the beginning of this business. It may also be said, that the principles on which the future system of machinery was to be constructed, had also taken definite form. The revolving card was already in operation. The system of drawing and doubling by the drawing frame was in operation, and slubbing and roving frames were in use, as well as the throstle for the warp yarns. The hand mule of Cromptons had settled the question of principle as regards mule spinning. Already several attempts had been made to "self-act" the hand mule ; so that it may be said that the time was ripe for the advent of the constructive mechanician, who should combine sound practical knowledge of materials best suitable for making cotton machinery, with sufficient appreciation of the special requirements of the cotton industry. Solid and durable construction, using *iron* rather than wood (then commonly used in all machines) wherever practicable, was the foundation on which the greatness of the concern has been built. From the first the best materials, and the most skilful labour, was put into all the products of the firm. At first the efforts of the firm were engrossed on a few only of the preparatory machines, such as openers and carding engines, but gradually the whole range of the machinery used in spinning and weaving was produced.

At a very early period the firm began to introduce special tools for all pieces of machinery which were required in large quantities. Nearly every machine made by the firm had its own speciality of tools, so that planing and milling almost replace the chisel and file of the skilled mechanic. A vast amount of ingenuity and invention has been expended on the tools of the firm. The labour-saving power of these machines is enormous. Another important point in connection with the use of these tools is that the men and boys employed on them are what are technically known as unskilled labourers. This last remark applies also to the

machinery in use in the moulding shops. The result of this is great economy of labour, especially of "skilled labour."

One great result from the use of tools has been the introduction of the system of making parts of machines interchangeable, which has proved a great factor in the success of the firm.

Formerly, and to a great extent at present, the business of textile machinery making was divided up into a considerable number of special trades. Thus, the rollers were made by the roller manufacturers; the spindles were made by the spindle makers; ring frame and throstle spindles and flyers were made by spindle and flyer manufacturers; the rollers used in mules and throstles by tin smiths; bolts and nuts and many other parts of machines were manufactured by small concerns. This system had many drawbacks, among others want of uniformity and unreliability of delivery of goods, so that in busy times it often happened that some particular kind of work could not be obtained at the proper time or in sufficient quantity. There were also economical disadvantages attending this system. The efforts of this firm were early directed to remedying this state of things, and for a great number of years all these several businesses have been carried on at these works, to the great advantage of the business.

From the foregoing it will be understood that no specially great inventions owe their existence to this concern, yet at the same time nearly every machine they make owes a great deal of its perfection and development to the constructors of Hartford Works. A very large number of valuable patents bear testimony to the skill and inventive ingenuity of the managing principals of the firm. It is useless to describe in detail the great number of patents which are the outcome of the constructors; suffice it to say, that they are well understood and appreciated by the great industry which has used them.

In the first place, they may be said to provide all the appliances required in the equipment of a modern cotton mill. For the preparatory processes they produce, amongst other machines, what is known as the "Patent Double Macarthy Roller Gin," which accomplishes the separation of the cotton from all the dirt and impedimenta by which it may be accompanied when it is in its raw state. This machine is capable of cleaning 120 lbs. of cotton per hour. The machines of this class which Messrs. Platt & Co. are now making are a great improvement upon the original Macarthy machine, no entanglement of fibre or obstruction of action occurring. At each elevation of the moving knives, the grids, which are attached to the knives, lift the cotton to the level of the fixed knife edge and of the exposed surfaces of the rollers; and on the descent of each moving knife, the seeds which have become separated from the fibre are disentangled by the prongs of the moving grid passing betwixt those of the lower or fixed grid, about 750 times a minute, and are by this rapidity of action "flirted out." The "opener" is the next machine to which the cotton is submitted, and the name of the Crichton opener is given to one of the specialties in this line which Messrs. Platt & Co. make. It was invented at the time of the

American Civil War for the treatment of the inferior descriptions of cotton which then made their way into the market. The cotton is fed into this machine and subjected to the action of beaters, and, air being drawn through the beating chambers at the same time, all the remaining impurities are extracted from the fibre, which emerges in a fleecy condition. An improved form of creeper-feeder is one of the latest additions to this machine. Then comes the Lap machine, of which Messrs. Platt & Co. make several varieties, the object of the invention being to further clean the cotton and deliver it in the form of laps. Now it is the turn of the carding machine, of which the firm make several kinds, two of the more noticeable varieties being a self-stripping flat card and a roller and clearer card. These machines are either single or double ones, and are remarkable for the facilities they give for oiling and cleaning the various parts, and the protection they afford against accident, the double card for cotton being first introduced by the late Mr. Henry Platt. Then, for the finer qualities of cotton yarn there are combing machines, the one made by Messrs. Platt being Heilman's, which is considered the most perfect combing machine in the market. "Drawing" frames are the next in succession, and these Messrs. Platt make with any required number of deliveries. Then follow Slubbing, Intermediate, Roving, and Fine Roving Frames, all fitted with special cone drum arrangements, which give a higher velocity to the cone drum strap, and admit of large change wheels and fewer intermediate wheels being used, ensuring a more reliable and accurate adjustment of the winding apparatus, and securing a firmly-wound bobbin without danger of stretching the roving. The self-acting mule, with many recent improvements, and made of any number of spindles up to 1,200; the Ring Spinning Machine; the Wet King Doubler; and calico looms of every type are amongst the other machines for the manufacture of cotton that this firm make in such large numbers.

In the same way they go through the entire processes of the woollen and worsted manufactures, which though apparently very much akin require to be treated by a distinct class of machines. Messrs. Platt & Co. have introduced into this country with much success the French system of preparing and spinning worsted yarns. It would be impossible in the space at our command to give even a catalogue of the various machines made by this eminent firm. Sufficient has been said, however, to show that Messrs. Platt & Co. have a wider influence than any other firm in the providing of the necessary mechanism for the successful carrying on of the various textile manufactures at home and abroad, and that to their skill and energy is due in a great measure the pre-eminence of British machinery in all parts of the world where manufacturing operations are pursued.

LIFE IN LANCASHIRE.

LANCASHIRE is an unknown land to the vast majority of people in the South of England, who know more of Timbuctoo than of the County Palatine. Yet no county possesses more features of general interest. It supplies all the world with calico; and Mr. H. M. Stanley has immensely raised the drooping spirits of the Manchester merchants by pointing out ways by which they could clothe the naked savages of Central Africa. It contains the most robust and the most intelligent class of workmen, as well as the most thrifty, of which this country can boast. Manchester is, of course, the representative town of the county, though it is not so lively nor so large as its neighbouring city of Liverpool, nor is it regarded so favourably by visitors. When approached from London, or, indeed, from any other place, it does not seem an attractive city. The smoke from a thousand chimneys pollutes the air and poisons the people; for, according to Dr. Samuelson, Manchester continues, in turn with Liverpool, to hold the position of the most unhealthy of English towns. M. Taine did not leave Manchester with a very favourable impression. He calls it a babel of bricks, and has not a single good word for it. "Walked through the city. Seen close at hand, it is still more dismal. The air and the soil appear charged with soot and fog. Manufactories with their blackened bricks, their naked fronts, their windows destitute of shutters, and resembling huge and cheap penitentiaries, succeed each other in rows." Such is the picture which the French critic gives of the cotton mills and the machine shops of the city. He totally ignores the magnificent warehouses which line the principal business streets, the public institutions of the town, and the energy of its inhabitants. Much might be said of each of these subjects. But in the present paper we purpose glancing only at the life and manners of the Lancashire folk.

Whatever might be said against its unhealthy character, Manchester has for many years had the reputation of being the most public-spirited city in England. It originated many of the great national, political, and social movements, the Anti-Corn Law League in particular. It furnished the title for a school of politics, of which Mr. Bright is the most celebrated living representative. It originated the movement for Parliamentary Reform, which, with the aid of Leeds and Birmingham, it carried to a successful issue. It originated the United Kingdom Alliance, the strongest and best organised temperance society in the world. Its educational

institutions are numerous and unrivalled. It is the seat of the Victoria University. It was the first town in the United Kingdom to adopt the Free Libraries Act, and it has provided a library and news-room in almost every suburb. "A true University in these days," said Carlyle, "is a collection of books," and this the Town Council has placed at the disposal of the humblest citizen. The supply of gas and of water is under the control of the same body. The question of the Ship Canal has also received the attention of the local authorities, who have been empowered by the people to levy a rate for the purpose of securing the passing of the bill for its promotion.

Lancashire men are noted for their great determination of character. When James Nasmyth, the great engineer, decided to commence business on his own account, it was a question with him which would be the better district in which to erect works. "I had seen," he says, "striking evidences of the natural aptitude of Lancashire workmen for every sort of mechanical employment, and had observed their unsparing energy while at work. I compared them with the workmen whom I had seen in London, and found them superior. They were men of greater character, they struck harder on the anvil; their minds were more capacious; their ingenuity was more inventive * * * I had no difficulty in obtaining abundance of skilled workmen in South Lancashire and Cheshire. I was in the neighbourhood of Manchester, which forms the centre of a population gifted with mechanical instinct. From an early period the finest sort of mechanical work has been turned out in that part of England. Much of the talent is inherited. It descends from father to son, and develops itself from generation to generation. I may mention one curious circumstance connected with the pedigree of Manchester, that much of the mechanical excellence of its workmen descends from the Norman smiths and armourers introduced into the neighbourhood at the Norman Conquest by Hugo de Lupus, the chief armourer of William the Conqueror, after the battle of Hastings, in 1060." Mr. Nasmyth's high opinion is shared by many other engineers, who have frequently spoken in praise of their workmen. The scene at some of the large works at the time of commencing and leaving work is hardly likely to be forgotten by a Southern visitor; and, what with the clatter of the clogs upon the flags of the streets and the din of the steam-whistle calling the men to work, there is little sleep to be had in the working-class districts after half-past five in the morning. The impression conveyed to the mind of Mr. R. T. Booth, the American Father Mathew, who visited Oldham some two years ago, is thus described by his biographer: "The poor people spoke a strange dialect, which, failing to understand, he pronounced jargon. Women walked about the streets with woollen shawls over their heads instead of hats or bonnets, and with clogs upon their feet. Sometimes he saw children barefooted as well as bareheaded; but that made him sad. Regularly, when he lay awake in bed, between five and six o'clock in the morning, he would hear the rattling of

thousands of clogs on the stone pavement in front of the house of Mr. Thomas Emmott, his kind host, as the ‘hands’ were hurrying to their various ‘shops.’ He says that he was grieved to see so much deformity among the poor—bow-legged men, crooked children, and lame women.” M. Taine, on the other hand, declared that the population of Manchester is more stunted than that of Oldham. The use of clogs is general throughout the manufacturing districts. Even babies who can just toddle wear them, but they are so neatly and prettily made that no objection on the score of taste, and even of comfort, can be raised against them. Clogs, however, are going out of fashion; and, when the day’s work is over, both lads and lasses put on their shoes, and show more respect for the requirements of civilisation.

The dialect of Lancashire is a puzzle, not only to Mr. Booth, but to our own countrymen. The Government Inspector of Schools for North and East Lancashire goes so far as to pronounce it vile, and considers it a hindrance to the teaching of good reading. The exponent of the Lancashire dialect, Mr. Ben Brierley, does not deny that it acts as a bar to the progress of refined reading, but when a Lancashire boy or girl consults the dictionary to ascertain the proper pronunciation of a word, and finds that it is seldom correctly given by even educated men, what, he asks, must be the feeling? “Not many years ago,” he says, “I had the painful experience of listening to a young clergyman’s rendering of ‘Othello’s Apology,’ which he commenced after this fashion:—

“Mowst powtent, gwave, and wevewend seignyaws,
My vewy nowble and appwoved good mastaws,
That I have tign aweigh this ois man’s daughtaw
Is mowst twue ; twee, I have mawied haw;
The vewy hade and fwont of my offending
Hath this extext, now maw.”

“I wonder,” he asks, “what dialect had interfered with this young gentleman’s education. I will be bound to say it was not the Lancashire. Such, however, may be the correct rendering of the English language according to the notion of some of our collegians; but if they have nothing better to offer in place of the method of reading taught by our ‘rude forefathers,’ we need not wonder at the vile dialect holding its own. Uneducated Lancashire people, as a rule, speak more grammatically than the same class of Cockneys. Yet we do not hear of this being a bar to correct reading in London. To the question, ‘Is this leap year?’ a Lancashire man’s answer would not be ‘It ain’t.’ It would probably be ‘It is no.’ If asked, ‘Are those pigs yours?’ he would not say, ‘They ain’t.’ His answer would be, if in the negative, ‘They’re not.’ If asked was he John Smith’s son and he was not, his reply would not be, ‘I ain’t,’ but more likely, ‘I’m not.’ How does the comparison favour the Londoner. In the manner of dealing with the letter H the Lancashire man is rarely found tripping, unless he pretends to be learned, and then he falls foul of the unfortunate letter with as much misadventure as we find

in the typical ‘Arry !’’ Sometimes, however, the natives have as much difficulty in understanding ordinary English as strangers have in understanding the local dialect. There is a story told that at a volunteer inspection the inspecting officer, on walking down the ranks, was so struck by the appearance of one of the privates that he stopped and asked, “ Who cut your hair ?” The volunteer, in a tone of astonishment, replied, “ Wurr ?” “ Who cut your hair ?” repeated the inspecting officer, “ Wurr ?” was still the answer, and again the inspecting officer, in a tone of impatience, asked, “ Don’t you understand English, man ? Who cut your hair ?” Still the puzzled volunteer only replied with his “ Wurr ?” Not being able to make anything out of the man, the inspecting officer turned to the captain of the company, saying, “ Do your men understand the English language ? Here I have asked this man three times over who cut his hair, and the only answer I can get is, “ Wurr !” The captain could hardly keep his face straight while he asked, “ Jemmy, who powd th’ yure ?” Jemmy, whose face at once brightened with a look of intelligence, was prompt in answering, “ Eaur Nan,” which was interpreted to the reviewing officer as, “ Our Nan,” the man’s wife, in whose tonsorial efforts Jemmy took such evident pride that the intended criticism on his roughly-cut locks was completely disarmed. This, no doubt, is an extreme illustration of the ignorance of the people in rural districts ; but, however unclassical the dialect may seem to polished ears, even educated natives cling to it because of its heartiness and the means it affords of transmitting thought and feeling which cannot be freely and fully rendered by any other form of speech.

Miss Louisa Potter has noted a quaint simplicity about the country people in Lancashire that wants a name in our vocabulary of manners—as far removed from the vulgarity of the lower orders in the town on the one hand as from the conventionalisms of the higher classes on the other—a simplicity that asserts itself because of its simplicity, and that never heard, and, if it did, never understood, “ who’s who.” “ Imagine,” she says, “ the surprise of the new vicar of the adjacent parish fresh from Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in all the dignity of his shovel-hat and garments of a rigidly clerical orthodoxy, accustomed to an agricultural population that smoothes down its forelocks in deference to the vicar, but never dreams of bandying words with him. Imagine him losing his way in one of his distant parochial excursions, and inquiring in a dainty, south country accent, from a lubberly boy weeding turnips in a field, ‘ Pray, my boy can you tell me the way to Bolton ? ’ ‘ Ay,’ replied the boy, ‘ yo’ mun go across yon bleachcroft, and into th’ loan an’ yo’ll get to Doffcocker, and then yo’re i’ th’ high road, and you can go straight on.’ ‘ Thank you,’ said the vicar, ‘ perhaps I can find it. And now, my boy, can you tell me what you do for a livelihood ? ’ ‘ I clean up the shippion, pills potatoes or does oddin ; an’ if I may be so bou’d, win yo’ tell me what yo’ do ? ’ persisted the boy. ‘ I teach the way of salvation. I show you the way to Heaven.’ ‘ Nay, nay,’ said the lad, ‘ dun-

not yo' pretend to teach me th' road to Heaven, and doesn't know the road to Bow'ton !'"

Many misconceptions prevail as to the character of the recreations of the Lancashire people. It is supposed in the South that kicking their wives and punching all who differ from them are the favourite recreations of the men. There are, no doubt, some grounds for this belief. "If tha doesna' shut up, I'll purr thee wi' my clogs," was the answer of an Oldham rough to a fellow-passenger who objected to smoking in a railway carriage; and but for the interference of another passenger the threat would have been carried out. No smoker, however well-bred, likes to be compelled to put out his pipe; and it would be a rather dangerous operation to eject a law-breaker in the person of a collier, especially if he had his bull-dog with him. One of the diversions of the factory lads in the north of Lancashire is jumping; and, in order to become efficient in the art, they dispense with all their clothing, however cold the weather. A Preston newspaper of the 5th January, 1884, reports the arrest of ten youths charged with obstructing the footpath, "jumping in a state of nudity." Fines varying from 1s. to £1 were inflicted upon these offenders against public morals. Jumping in a state of nature must not, however, be considered one of the usual recreations of the Preston lads. Blackburn, in the northwest of Lancashire, is generally considered the centre of the rough element of the county. It was at Blackburn where an imaginative journalist laid the scene of the cock-fight in the summer of 1883. The subject led Mr. T. D. Sullivan to put a question to the Home Secretary, whose reply was most facetious. "The honourable member will observe," said Sir William Harcourt, "that in order there should be prosecution it is necessary there should be an offence and an offender, and in order that proceedings should be taken it is essential that there should have been a cock-fight. It is true that the details appeared in most of the public journals, but I have before observed that these are harrowing and heart-rending incidents, and of a romantic character, which are not intended to be taken as true. They are works of fiction, and are favourite subjects among journalists." Surely, also, that was a work of fiction which appeared in a London evening paper on a certain day in April last, describing an "incursion of Northern barbarians, hot-blooded Lancastrians, sharp of tongue, rough and ready, of uncouth garb and speech."

If we admit the truth of some of these allegations, we deny that the picture represents the real character of Lancashire working men. The form of their recreations differs in different towns. The disciples of Isaac Walton number many hundreds in Bolton; and, in fact, all through the colliery districts fishing is becoming a popular pursuit. The only drawback is the long distances these amateur fishermen are compelled to travel in order to gratify their elevating pursuit. In other towns, especially in Manchester, botanising is the favourite recreation. In "Eawr

Folk" Mr. Edwin Waugh thus indicates the varied tastes of the better classes of artisans:—

"Eawr Johnny gies his mind to books;
 Eawr Abram studies plants,
 He caps the dule for moss an' ferns
 An' grooin' polyants.
 For aught abeawt mechanickin'
 Eawr Ned's the very lad;
 My uncle Jamie rocts i' th' stars
 Enough to drive him mad."

The popularity of botanical pursuits may be inferred from the fact that in and around Manchester there are at least fifty societies, holding not less than seven hundred meetings every year. Some of these societies are over a century old. Once a year an aggregate meeting is held, attended by about 1,000 members. The business at these meetings consists chiefly in the naming of uncommon plants found by the members, and in listening to an address by the president. All the botanical societies, with a few exceptions, meet on Sunday, and invariably at public-houses. Not many years ago Sunday was the only day on which the members were at liberty, and the public-house the only available place where they could meet. The veteran botanist, Mr. Leo H. Grindon, affirms that no religious services were ever more decorously conducted than these meetings. "Working men," he contends, "can assemble at a tavern and not abuse it, quite as well as gentlemen; in either case all depends on the ideas they carry in with them. It is the peculiar characteristic of intelligent delight in the objects of Nature, that with very rare exceptions it brings with it a moral and harmonising influence on the heart, so that men who gather together as our Lancashire botanists do, albeit in a public-house and on Sunday, are the most likely of all in their station of life to conduct themselves in a manner becoming intelligent beings. Twice only, during upwards of seventy years, have the meetings been interfered with by the authorities, and in neither case has it been from disapproval of them or because of misconduct on the part of the members." Another reason is contained in the following extract from a letter of one of the members:—"There was no rent to pay—a consideration with the members, who were weavers, carters, labourers, and gardeners—but since then travelling facilities have been greater; nevertheless, even now the public-house gives greater facilities for meeting than any other place, being cheaper and more convenient. In reference to Sunday as a day of meeting, I think the almost unanimous opinion is that it is the best day, because everybody is free and cleaned up, and a longer time is given for excursions, attending district meetings, and communing with kindred spirits." In winter these humble students of Nature spend their spare time in mounting their specimens, in attending botanical meetings, and, by means of the various scientific societies, increasing their knowledge of other sciences.

Lancashire men have been exhibited to the world as types of extravagance ; as a matter of fact, they are the most thrifty, as well as most benevolent, in England. A few weeks ago we visited a small manufacturing village called Tottington, near Bury. Although trade was bad, there were no signs of poverty in the village. On the contrary, it bore evidence of wonderful prosperity. It has, we learned, not fewer than 420 model cottages, which are owned chiefly by cotton operatives. Nearly all these cottages are built of stone, and present a very substantial appearance. The story of their erection is worth telling. Less than a quarter of a century ago the village had an unenviable reputation for drunkenness and brutality, but a marvellous change has taken place in the habits of the villagers during this period. First came the temperance missionary, who pictured the evils of drunkenness and the blessings of temperance. His words evidently sank deep into the hearts of his hearers, for, without waiting for others to take the lead, they started a temperance society forthwith. Having given up drinking, they began to be discontented with the miserable houses in which they had existed, and to think about building cottages for themselves. The co-operative movement then stepped in, and it taught the people how to invest their money to the best advantage. Some of the cottagers, however, managed to save money enough to buy their houses without the assistance of either building society or co-operative store ; but, directly or indirectly, about 200 cottages have been built by the store. Some idea of the influence of the store may be gathered from the fact that out of a population of 6,000 it has nearly 1,000 members. It has lent money on mortgage to 143 cottagers, and, during the last eight years, it has returned to members in dividends some £30,000. The children are also being educated in habits of thrift, for they have no less than £1,655 credited to their account at the store, in addition to £600 deposited in the Post Office Savings Bank during the last twelve months. The spread of temperance has also been the means of reducing the number of public-houses. Twenty years ago the village had a population of 4,000, with eleven beer-houses and public-houses ; it has now a population of 6,000, with six licensed houses. It is worthy of note that one of the hostgeries of the place has been transformed into a co-operative store, and its billiard-room into a library ; for the directors vote about £100 a year for educational purposes. The temperance sentiment which prevails in the village seems very strong, and we were informed that one-third of the population consists of teetotallers. The example of Mr. William Hoyle, millowner, landowner, and philanthropist, who lives in the village, has no doubt influenced the villagers in favour of temperance ; but we were assured that he had never been in the habit of preaching temperance to his workpeople. They have worked out their own salvation, and present one of the most striking examples of the spread of temperance and thrift in Lancashire.

These virtues have made much progress in many other

villages in the county, but Oldham takes the lead in thrift. Many of the cotton mills are owned by the weavers themselves who have gradually become their own masters. Moreover, hundreds of the operatives live in their own houses, and some thousands are in a fair way of becoming their own landlords. Some idea of the progress of the co-operative movement may be gathered from the fact that one of the societies has a membership of nearly 10,000, who received no less than £35,803 as dividends during last year. The conditions of living in this county are far superior to those in the South of England. Every family lives in a separate house, the rent of which never exceeds five or six shillings; in the vast majority of cases it does not exceed three shillings. In fact, the comforts within the reach of working people are so great that it is impossible to exaggerate them. Those who exchange them for living in over-crowded London are only too glad to return to the home of their childhood. The difference in the character of the London people and that of Lancashire folk is equally great. The late Sam Bamford, the "Lancashire Radical," who lived in the metropolis seven years, declared that he could hear more common sense spoken in one hour in conversing with the intelligent working-classes of Lancashire than he could in a day with a corresponding class of the London artisans.

Lancashire men have the reputation of being fond of play as well as work, but they scarcely ever pinch their bodies to provide the means to travel. In Oldham they form "going-off clubs," from which they drew at the last "wakes" no less than £60,000, which was nearly all spent in visits to remote places. The spirit and determination with which they keep up this annual festival is one of the features of the manufacturing districts. The crowning of the May Queen is also observed in a few villages, but this old custom, like that of Morris-Dancing, has almost disappeared. One of the customs which still prevail in some parts is that of inviting neighbours and friends after the recovery from child-birth to a "rum and tay (tea) baggin'." A local poet has written a "tay and rum ditty" in honour of this custom, which is also observed on many other occasions. When Ab-o'-th-Yate went to have his life insured the following dialogue between the doctor and himself took place:—"What do you mostly drink?" "I stick to honest fourpenny." "Never drink spirits?" "A sope o' rum i' my tay every kissunin', that's o'." The progress of temperance sentiment, however, is effecting a revolution in the habits and customs of the people, and doubtless before long this old custom will be numbered among the things of the past.

ARTHUR READE.

OUR GIPSIES AND THEIR CHILDREN.

BY GEORGE SMITH OF COALVILLE.

THE term "Gipsy" has always had in this country a kind of magic spell attached to it. It has been a showy, dainty dish that many have spasmodically nibbled at in one form or other for generations. To some who have either looked at it or tasted it, hoping to find moral excellence enough to cure the ills of life, it has been sickening and nauseous, which has created fleeting pity ; yea, even those who had admired the fascinating side of gipsy life have, after having had their heart's content to the full, turned away from it in disgust. Gipsy life may have been a "joyous life," but they have not proved it to be so in the long run.

The origin of the gipsies, as to who they are and whence they became regarded as the peculiar race of wandering, wastrel, ragamuffin vagabonds they are at the present time, has been a theme upon which a bookworm could gloat. They have been a chest of secret drawers into which the curious have delighted to pry ; a difficult problem in Euclid to solve ; and an unreadable book for the author.

They have talked--and to some extent do so still--in languages that have puzzled the historians, scholars, novelists, and farmers whose fowls, pigs, and sheep they have too often purloined in order to enjoy their midnight meal, while sitting round their crackling fire in some country lane, or at the edge of some wood, by the side of rippling waters, with the moon's silver beams enlivening the charming scene ; the whole camp being in high glee over so rich a repast, obtained with so little trouble.

The primary object they had in view in setting out from Northern India upon their dark pilgrimage has never been fully explained.

They were driven out of India at the point of the sword, and by the hand of bitter persecutors, during the tenth and eleventh centuries by Mahmood the Demon, and also at the commencement of the fifteenth century by Timur Beg, encouraged by the ever lurking desire that lies within them of seeking a haven of rest, which they always believed was in reserve for them, and my researches confirm me in this view more strongly to-day than when I mentioned it in my "Gipsy Life."

There have been two great exodes of low caste, or no caste,

Indians *i.e.* gipsies, from India during the great wars that took place under those two cold-blooded murderers there can be no doubt.

The first exodus landed the gipsies by the Persian Gulph and the Euphrates Valley, into European Turkey, with some stragglers further westward into Europe.

The second exodus landed them by scores of thousands into Europe, some of whom found their way into this country at the commencement of the sixteenth century, as "counts," "earls," "lords," "ladies," and "gentlemen," with their veins full to almost bursting with "blue blood." No doubt with their Eastern habits, costumes, dark eyes, olive hue, tanned skins, prettily formed figures, curly raven locks, exquisite noses, the gipsy maidens of bygone days would—if half be true that some writers have said about them—be simply bewitching and charming.

No wonder that when some of our fascinating, clever novelists have been under the more fascinating gipsy spell they have been led to paint gipsy life in England in its unreal aspects which has no doubt brought gain to themselves, but serious harm to the gipsies and the nation.

An Indian told me sometime since that the oral and written tradition in India is that more than 100,000 of the low caste Indians gipsies—left India in one batch.

The oral tradition of the Children of Israel travelling from Egypt to Palestine is, in some parts of the East, as fresh and green as it was when Moses commenced his forty years' pilgrimage (B.C. 1491), and this may have been one of the causes that led the gipsies to wander westward, in the hope of finding a land flowing with milk and honey and a city with the streets paved with gold.

Who the gipsies were before the tenth century has never been solved. Almost every writer who has written anything about the gipsies has had a different tale to tell about their origin, and to swell the number of theories and conjectures, I venture to throw a few gipsy chips upon the surface of gipsydom that may in some measure indicate which way the gipsy tide has been flowing from and where it is flowing to, and which chips the hand of time may magnetize and be the further means of drawing some particles of historic truths relating to the gipsies to the surface, so that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not enter therein.

At present I only hazard it as a fantastical phantasmagoric problem, to be worked out more by the hand of time, that they are the descendants of some of the "ites" of the East.

It is my decided conviction that the true history of the gipsies, which has yet to be written, will be from lines marked out chiefly in the Bible, and not from philological contradictions, hypotheses, assumptions, myths, and Eastern fables.

Of course, these side issues, or by-paths, may help to clear up the Bible lines leading to the gipsy fountain—which, like the

waters of Marah, have been bitter enough, but I have hope that before long our Government will throw an enactment among the bitter gipsy waters, composed of the materials I have set forth, that will sweeten them with infinite gain to themselves and the nation—which of themselves, apart from the old book, will only lead us into further doubt, darkness, and mist, relating to the gipsies and their origin.

The gipsies have an interesting history which will most certainly be made clear some day; and, what is equally certain, the better class of gipsies, of Eastern origin, will be once more dwellers in the country which is their own, and from which they have been driven by the hand of persecution. Of course, the riff-raff, ragamuffin, vagabond gipsies will be left behind, to uncivilise the people they are brought in contact with.

I am also strongly of opinion that the gipsies had wandered through Persia by straggling parties to India—of whom numbers were seen in Persia generations before they were seen in India—the remnants of whom have been seen by various writers, and in almost all ages, whither they had been driven by their inveterate enemies, i.e. either the Children of Israel or the Arabs.

The Jews and Arabs hate the gipsies with deadly hatred to this day, and the gipsies hate the Jews and Arabs with feelings of revenge far from dying out.

The Jews have special liking and regard for sheep and lambs, and they look upon pigs as unclean and unfit for food. The gipsies look upon pigs with special favour, and regard pork as their chief food, Sunday and week day, winter and summer. The Jews offer sacrifices of lambs, pigeons and doves; the gipsies offer sacrifices of hedgehogs and fowls. The purest gipsies never (or seldom) eat boiled hedgehogs; they cook them with their “jackets on,” in the open fire, upon the ground, and worship them to the extent of almost amounting—if not entirely—to idolatry and the offering of sacrifices.

I have never seen in my life in either tent or van either a leg or a shoulder of mutton. Pork! pork! from Monday morning to Saturday night, with a relish of pork for their Sunday dinner.

The Jews look upon rabbits as unclean and unfit for food; the gipsies regard rabbits as their chief “universal pot boiler”; in fact, there has ever been war, in every phase of life, between the Jewish tribes and the gipsy tribes, and as the gipsy tribes have been the weakest, with a curse hanging over them, they have fared the worst in the long conflict that has been going on for thousands of years; but the day of their deliverance draweth nigh, not by the sword, but by being recognised as belonging to the universal brotherhood of man, and claiming the blessings and privileges of civilisation, which we must not deny them at our peril; the tramping, camping, vagabondish life of the present race of gipsies will most surely come to an end.

To come back to their origin, my opinion is that these straggling "ites" became in course of time the low castes of India, i.e. the Suders, Djatts, &c. and are subject to much persecution in India, the same as the Jews have been, and are at the present time in Russia and some other European countries, and I have no doubt in my mind that the general persecution the gipsies have been subject to, in almost all ages, and in all countries, has brought them to the low level they are at the present time in society.

The Suders and Djatts which spring from the gipsies of Palestine are, and have been, for many centuries looked upon as different from the other castes and tribes in India, and they can emigrate, or move about as they like, which is not the case with the true Indian castes.

There are no special restricted anathemas hurled at the Indian gipsies the same as there are at the true Indian. The anathemas under which the gipsies live in India are those of universal hatred, the same as they are under in Europe and other countries.

There seems to have been withering curses hanging upon and darkening the path of the gipsies from time immemorial from some cause or other, not as yet fully explained, but which may be made clear by the gipsy evolution that I have humbly set in motion during the last six or seven years.

I am inclined to think that the leading sins of the primogenitors of the gipsy race—whatever they were—were those attending the carnal and lustful affections run wild, outside natural affections and all moral and civil laws; at any rate, sins, the outcome of this kind of life, have been the leading sins of the gipsies. I should think there is no race of people upon the face of the earth were marriage laws have always been held in lighter esteem than among the gipsies.

There are certain characteristic features connected with the Ammonites, having the mark of Lot's sin upon them, which favour the assumption that the gipsies are the descendants of Ammon, the son of Lot. Be this as it may, similar curses to those which have followed the Ammonites have followed the gipsies. The same may be said of the Moabites, the descendants of the other son of Lot by his daughter. It may be well to notice in passing that the Moabites and the Ammonites were always the bitter enemies of the Israelites.

There are certain features that would seem to link the gipsies with the Amalekites, the descendants of Amalek, the grandson of Esau. The Amalekites were powerful, and of a wandering disposition, and who always exhibited the most deadly hatred to the Hebrews through Jacob having robbed their founder Esau of his birthright. A perpetual curse has rested upon the Amalekites, so it has in like manner rested upon the gipsies. Their beauty, craft, and duplicity prevented their destruction at the hands of

Saul, so in like manner have these features prevented the extermination of the gipsies in all ages, yea, even in our own country.

In some points the gipsies resemble the Midianites, especially as being wandering merchants, with a disposition to either beg, buy, or steal children, as was shown in the case of their buying Joseph.

If the gipsies are of the Midianites, then the world owes them an eternal debt of gratitude for preserving the life of Joseph, which led to the greatest train of blessings resting upon this world that has ever been seen since it was created.

The Midianites were believers in soothsaying—so is this a leading feature of the gipsies. These two features, viz., that of child-buying or child-stealing and fortune-telling, are, and have always been, the markedly prominent features of the gipsies.

The Midianites harrassed the Israelites for generations until they were finally overthrown in the Valley of Jezreel, from which they have never recovered, and the remnants are wandering up and down the world somewhere to-day.

If there is the faintest taint of the blood of the Midianites to be traced in the gipsies, then the world owes the gipsies its thanks instead of its curses. Be this as it may, it is time that the day of curses and persecutions was gone for ever, and the day of blessings begun.

There is an oral tradition among the old type of gipsies, that the world owes them its blessing for saving the life of Jesus while journeying to Egypt with His mother. My opinion is, that if the gipsies saved anyone's life that was destined to be a saviour, it was the life of Joseph.

There are two points which go to prove something in favour of the idea that I have set forth, viz., that they were of the "ites" who were in possession of Palestine before it was taken possession of by the Children of Israel, one of the most conclusive links connecting the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites with the gipsies is this, there were any number of kings among them, and that the people followed a wandering existence, living in rocks and caves, and that they were driven out of the land by the Children of Israel towards Persia and India, to which places they may have migrated in straggling hordes as a place of safety. In the journeying of the Children of Israel they came upon a strong race of people in the land of Zin—Zinites. These the Children of Israel dispersed. Some of the lowest of the low in India and Persia are called Zingari. In Turkey a number of low caste people revolted against the Turkish rule, headed by a leader named Zinganeus. In Spain, Italy and other European countries the gipsies are often called Zingari. It is not unlikely but that Moses married for one of his wives a gipsy damsel. Jethro was a Kenite. Kenites were strong, and dwelt in rocks and caves, and were taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar.

If the gipsies are the descendants of the Moabites and Ammonites, who occupied the land east of Jordan, it is just possible that the gipsies did not arrive in India before the middle of the seventh century, whither they were driven by the tide of the great Arabian invasion, which issued from the desert into some parts of Palestine about that time.

If this hypothesis is correct, the gipsies would be in India about 300 years before the first exodus commenced westward, to escape the cruelties of Mahmood the Demon, which would be the same time the Children of Israel were in Egypt. There can be no doubt but that Mahmood the Demon inflicted upon the Suders, Djatts, &c., i.e. the gipsies, more terrible punishment than Pharoah inflicted upon the Children of Israel.

Their migrations from India westward has been, no doubt, with the idea of settling down in what they have considered to be their own country. There is an idea rankling in the breasts of the purists gipsies that they have a home somewhere, but they cannot tell where, and these promptings have led, years ago, some of the gipsies to leave our shores eastward and homeward, as they think. They have for long been expecting a deliverer to come to lead them forward.

In some leading features the gipsies bear strong resemblance to the Gibeonites when they were threatened with extermination by Joshua, 1,450 years before Christ. It is stated that "they did work willy and went and made as if they had been ambassadors, and took old sacks upon their asses, and wine bottles, old, and rent, and bound up; and old shoes and clouted upon their feet, and old garments upon them; and all the bread of their provision was mouldy. And they went to Joshua unto the camp of Gilgal, and said unto him and the men of Israel: 'We be come from a far country, now therefore make a league with us.'" Joshua made a league with them, and for a short time the Gibeonites lived upon the fat of the land, but they were not long before they were found out, which brought Joshua's curses upon them instead of his blessings, and had it not been for the princes, they would have been destroyed.

They had beguiled and deceived Joshua, and for their duplicity they were always to be under God's displeasure, and were henceforth to be "the hewers of wood and drawers of water."

The favourite work of the gipsies of to-day, who have a taste for labour, is to make skewers, clothes-pegs, mend chairs, and to pitch their tents by the side of rippling waters.

Nobody now-a-days thinks that a gipsy sketch is complete without a gipsy damsel is to be seen with a pail of water on her head.

1,450 years after Christ, which is a somewhat singular coincidence, and later on, we find the gipsies in Europe making leagues and obtaining passports from kings and emperors, including the Emperor Sigismund, Wladislas, King of Hungary, who also re-

ceived letters of privilege and protection from the Prince of the House of Bathory, and also from the Kings of France, Crusius, Wurstisen and Guller, which passports and letters secured for the gipsies on their pilgrimage court favours and fat living, but as in the case of the Gibeonites, they were not long before they were found out and persecution followed savagely and rapidly upon their heels, but instead of the kingly and queenly authorities decreeing that they were to be put to no more punishment than that of hewing wood and drawing water, they have been decreed to relentless, bitter persecution and ignominy, and in this way they have been treated by us and other European nations for more than 350 years.

The gipsies have asked for bread and we have given them scorpions, and they have asked for fish and we have given them serpents. They have lied, stolen and deceived us, and we have hounded them to death for their pains, and most surely the retribution that has followed them will follow us, and speedily, if we do not give up the game of driving them to ruin, without either judge or jury.

The cruelty and injustice that has been inflicted upon the gipsies by damning persecution on the one hand and universal indifference to their moral welfare on the other, increases in terrible magnitude as we approach the vast numbers and more thoroughly investigate the condition of the gipsies that have been roaming over many parts of the world for centuries.

A few years ago there were in Persia 15,000 gipsies; in Armenia and Asiatic Turkey, 67,000; in Egypt, 16,000; in Turkey, 104,000; in Servia, 24,000; in Bosnia and Herzegovina, 9,000; in Roumania, 150,000; in Austria, 10,000; in Bohemia, 13,000; in Hungary, 159,000; in Transylvania, 78,000; in Hungary proper, 36,000; in Spain, 40,000; in France, 5,000; in Germany and Italy, 34,000; in Scandinavia, 1,000; in Russia, exclusive of Polish gipsies, 50,000; in England, between 40,000 and 50,000—all classes of tent, van, ditch and cart dwellers included—making a total of about 860,000 gipsies, that have been doing their best, to say the least of it, to make the world as barren of moral virtues and excellencies as the deserts of Arabia are of pretty flowers and beautiful verdant vegetation; and the gipsies are no more likely—unless taken in hand as I have suggested in my “I’ve Been a-Gipsyin”—to bear delightful, healthy, charming, heavenly fruit than the plains of Sodom, which are now covered by the Dead Sea, in which neither animal nor vegetable life can live. What the condition of the gipsies in other parts of Europe is I have only been able to gather from books and reports.

If it is anything like what our present day gipsy life in this country is, then I say it is truly horrible and horrifying to the last degree.

In my many long years' visits to the fairs, feasts and races, the quiet country nooks, commons, flats and marshes, where the gipsies, travellers, van-dwellers and others of the wandering vagabond classes do most congregate, I have seen sights and heard tales that would almost freeze any man's blood—outside the gipsy ring—in his veins.

Except in a few cases lawful marriages are of very rare occurrence.

Heathenish habits are practised in high glee, while civilizing customs and habits are held at the tips of their fingers with feelings almost amounting to repugnance.

To-day we have in our midst close upon 30,000 gipsy children *i.e.* children who are rambling over the country with their parents in vans, tents and carts, sleeping in barns, and on the ditch banks, not 2 per cent. of whom can either read or write.

On the outskirts of London alone there are over 2,000 so-called gipsy children, but who are in reality the children of parents who have taken to the rambling, vagabondish life, to escape work, rates and taxes.

During one of my gipsy rambles near London, I came upon an encampment of our present day gipsies, which I give herein, to show the kind of gipsy life among us to-day. There were about twelve tents and vans, and close upon thirty men and women and fifty children. These mud-bank heathens seemed to a great extent to have lost all sense of shame or decency. Big "gipsy boys and wenches" were running about almost nude. Not one could read or write. A large, fine Board school was close by, and during meal and play times the town children and the gipsy children played together. At two o'clock the school-bell separated them. The town children to school to learn civilising precepts, and the gipsy children to their wigwams, to follow their demoralising customs and habits, and with tongue in cheek defying the school authorities on the simple ground that their vans are not looked upon in the eye of the law as dwellings.

Not only do the tent and van dwellers defy the school authorities, but they defy the sanitary authorities and spread infectious diseases over the country without let or hindrance.

The old romantic element of gipsy life left our shores with the Cuckoo fifty years ago, to die without resurrection; at any rate, it has not returned, except in the flutter and fancy of a young lord or two, to wither and die almost immediately it was born in the midst of a "jollification and a spree."

For some years the amorous, fascinating, clever novelists have tried their bewitching powers to woo back to our shores, and to heaven, as they think, the romantic gipsy life of bygone days, but without effect. The smiling faces, bewitching words, and bejewelled hands of dandies are poor influences to lift gipsies heavenward.

Nor will the condition of our gipsies and their children be improved by the policemen with their staves and "bag and baggage" policy. Thrusting the gipsies into gaol—"stone jug"—and on the treadmill, will not make gipsies good Christians or good citizens. This plan was tried centuries ago with painful results. Our present day gipsies must be brought back to settled life by hook or by crook, or they will work more mischief and evil to themselves and the country than they have hitherto done.

The only plan to bring about an improvement in their condition is by means of the sanitary officer's influence upon gipsy and other travelling homes, and the schoolmaster's influence upon gipsy and other travelling children; and if magistrates and members of Parliament are wise, they will help me to get a Bill passed early next session.

The process of improvement I propose may be slow, but it will be easy, effective and sure.

What I propose to do is to extend the principles embodied in the Canal Boats Acts of 1877 and 1884 to all movable habitations such as shows, tents, vans and like places, and which plans I laid before the Select Committee appointed by Parliament in 1883 to consider and report upon my Canal Bill of 1881-2-3; and which plans are more fully set forth in my work "*I've Been a-Gipsyin'*".

To sum up my plans in a few words. What I want, without interfering with liberty—which is a boon possessed by few other countries—and the free action of those who travel the country to sell their wares and with exhibitions is, in the first place, that vans and other abodes of the kind should be registered annually in a simple, easy and inexpensive manner, so as to give the sanitary officer, instead of the policeman, power to see to the health and well-being of those who dwell in them; and secondly, to give all travelling children, *i.e.* those living in tents, vans, carts and shows, a free education, which can be brought about by means of a free educational pass book, on a plan I laid before the Select Committee.

I speak what I know when I say that if we as a nation do not take the steps to protect and educate our travelling children in the way I have indicated, we shall find, when it will be too late, lying at our doors, a perilous evil that will not be driven away by legislative enactments and policemen's cudgels.

Several European nations of bygone ages have tried to improve the condition of the gipsies in their midst, but their efforts came to grief, owing to the first steps being taken with the adults. All efforts to improve the gipsies must begin with the children, and we, as a nation, would do well to lead the van in this direction, as we did with canal legislation for improving the condition of the canal children, especially when the means proposed are so simple and easy.

Slow, sure and easy, must be our motto in dealing with the gipsies, and surprising results will soon follow. They are sharp and clever, and only require to be taken in hand kindly, and they will soon repay the country and their benefactors for their trouble with smiles and thanks.

The gipsies will hail with delight any simple, inexpensive, common-sense plan for the improvement of their children, and woe will be upon us if we as a nation withhold it from them.

The suggestions, facts and plans set forth herein are strings out of which I hope to draw legislative and philanthropic music that will some day, before long I hope, draw the gipsies and their children heavenwards. In the meantime, public opinion must act as a snake-charmer to prevent these poor unfortunate brethren of ours from doing further mischief, to their own hurt, and the country's welfare, and also to lead them to better things than there are in reserve for those living the lives of idle gipsy vagabonds.

"'MID DEVON HILLS."

'Mid Devon hills we wandered far,
Amongst the fern and heather,
Light clouds were floating o'er the sky,
For it was summer weather.

We wandered through the ferny combe,
Where rippling brooks were straying,
And lingered by the foamy falls,
That o'er the rocks were playing.

For she and I, by chance had met,
Down in that lovely valley,
A bramble introduced us both,
That fain with her would dally.

Her sunburnt cheeks looked, oh, so fair,
Her eyes with pleasure glowing,
Her joyous laugh ran through the air,
Like rippling water flowing.

"I go this way," she gently said,
"I too am that way straying,"
Then through the sun-lit vale we passed,
No more our steps delaying.

And so we two went gaily on,
Till by the brook we tarried,
'Mid Devon hills, where first we met,
And now we two are married.

E. A. H.

A BONE OF CONTENTION.

THE first baby is not generally supposed to be a bone of contention. On the contrary it is, as a rule, considered a bond of union between its parents. Strange, however, to say, this was not the case with Captain Grant, of the —th Hussars, and his wife. Indeed it nearly caused an estrangement, and it certainly had to answer for the only quarrel they ever had.

There is no doubt that when the infant first made its appearance, Jack Grant was as fond and proud a father as could be found in the United Kingdom. He tried to see the numerous likenesses to various relatives which his wife discovered in their son; he persuaded himself he felt highly flattered when she declared she saw in the somewhat plain infant a strong look of himself; and finally wound himself up to such a pitch of enthusiasm, he actually made an awkward attempt to hold the child, and even impressed a fatherly kiss on its small, mottled, red face.

This was a very happy state of affairs so long as it lasted, but unfortunately a change was soon to be observed. Captain Grant began to wish his wife could find some other subject on which to exercise her conversational powers than "the baby;" he also commenced to wonder if it was necessary to talk to the child in the senseless and extremely odd style which she and the nurse invariably used when they addressed it. At last he was obliged to confess to himself that, unnatural as it seemed, he occasionally found his boy, in spite of his numerous perfections, a decided bore.

"You see," he confided to his chum, Jim Reeves, "a fellow gets so deuced sick of hearing nothing but agoo-and-agoo-and-a-bubble-bubble-bubble, which is the way my wife and the nurse always speak to the poor little brat. I can't get the idiotic rubbish out of my head; and upon my word, when some of the fellows the other day at the mess were talking of the new regulations that have just come out, and asked me what I thought of them, I was as near as possible making a consummate ass of myself before them all, by answering, 'Agoo-and-agoo-and-a-bubble-bubble-bubble.' I assure you I was within an ace of doing so. If I could have a little sensible conversation with my wife when the child had been put to bed, it would not be so bad, but sleeping or waking 'the baby' occupies all the attention. I am supposed to be violently excited to hear of the 'heavenly, sweet smile' that came over the brat's face when he saw his bottle being

brought to him, or that he has managed to crawl three more inches on the ground, or something else that appears to me equally uninteresting. It's really awfully rough on a fellow."

"Rather trying," remarked his friend, sympathetically.

"Trying!" repeated Jack. "That is not the word for it. I declare it makes me so irritable, I sometimes feel inclined to swear at them all round, the baby included."

"Come," answered Jim, reprovingly, "I call that unfair. What! swear at a helpless infant, whose only method of retort and strongest language for some time to come will be 'a-goo' and 'a-bubble.' That is fighting upon unequal terms with a vengeance."

"Oh, if you are going to chaff me I'll shut up," replied Jack testily. "I only wish you were bothered by the same sort of thing, and then I don't think you would find it so amusing," saying which he turned on his heel and walked away in a huff.

It was in this unsatisfactory frame of mind regarding his firstborn, that Jack proceeded to wend his way home one cold winter's afternoon, a short time before Christmas. He had had a hard day's work, and was looking forward with a feeling of relief to a chat with his wife and a cigar before dinner. True his mind was somewhat disturbed by the thought that it was possible the *tête-à-tête* he anticipated might be broken into by the presence of a third party. But he resolutely shook off this gloomy foreboding, and walked on briskly towards his destination.

On arriving there and hearing his wife's voice somewhere overhead, he called out to her he was home and was going to the smoking-room, where he would be glad of her company till it was time to dress for dinner.

"Very well, dear," she answered brightly; "we'll come in a minute."

"We!" said Jack to himself, "who else is she bringing? Surely it can't be the child. She can never mean to turn this room, as well as every other in the house, into a nursery. Hang it all, that would really be unbearable!"

If, however, he had any doubts on the subject, they were soon to be dispelled, for he had hardly lit his cigar before his wife made her appearance with the baby in her arms.

"Well," thought Jack resignedly. "I suppose there is nothing for it but to grin and bear it."

"Now, Jack, my dearest," exclaimed his wife gushingly, "I have such a piece of news for you. You will never guess what it is. It is something almost too delightful for words."

"I also have something to tell you," broke in Jack as his wife paused to take breath, for he felt instinctively that the important news to which his wife referred has something to do with his offspring, and he knew that once that all-absorbing subject was

started all other topics of conversation would be inevitably banished for the time being. "I also have something to tell you. I met Chalmers to-day; he is staying here for a few days with his cousin, so I asked him to come and dine with us some time next week, and I think we might invite one or two people to meet him. Now, on what day do you think we had better ask him, and who else shall we have?"

"I will think about it in a minute," answered his little wife eagerly, "but I *must* tell you my news first. Fancy! Baby is getting a tooth, and he is only just four months old!"

"That's capital," said Jack, in a voice intended to express unlimited delight. "There is no doubt that the little fellow is very well on for his age. I should think now he will be trotting about all over the place before we know where we are."

"I don't think I should feel I was doing my duty by him if I allowed him to do such a thing, even if he could," replied his wife severely. "I don't know if you are particularly anxious to see your child grow up bandy-legged. I can't say I am."

"Ah, yes, I forgot he is rather weak in the legs at present," remarked Jack in a crestfallen voice. "But, May," he continued, more cheerfully, feeling he had done his duty bravely, and nothing more could be expected of him for the present, "what about having Chalmers?"

"Let me see," said May, thoughtfully. Then, appealing to the baby, "What does 'ou think, my pretty? Agoo-and-agoo-and-a-bubble-bubble——"

"Come," said Jack, a little impatiently, "try to arrange something, as Chalmers is only here for a few days, and I want you to write to him to-night."

"Must we tink, my sweet?" continued May, apparently oblivious of everything but the existence of her son, and only half hearing her husband's last remark. "Must we tink, my beauty? Well, then, agoo-and-agoo-and-a bub——"

"For Heaven's sake! try for one moment to attend to what I am saying," said Jack sharply. "I won't trouble you long, and then you will be at liberty to return to your very intellectual conversation with the child."

This time, May quite took in what her husband said, but being annoyed at the way he had spoken she determinedly took no notice of his request, but staring absently into the fire, went on talking to her baby.

"Yes, my own own, does your pretty papa want——"

"Confound it!" exclaimed poor tired Jack angrily, "Do you want to drive me mad with your infernal nonsense? I have never yet been considered pretty, nor have I any wish to be called so at this time of my life. Can't you find a more suitable adjective to apply to me than that?"

"Indeed I can," returned May, losing her temper in her turn;

"cross, ill-tempered, rude, unnatural, cruel, are all words which may be applied to you in your present state of mind."

"Well, I am sure I am not surprised," retorted Jack, "the only wonder is, I don't go off my head with hearing the flow of absurd nonsense that seems to me to go on, morning, noon, and night."

"If you call talking to one's own child, absurd nonsense, I don't," said Maggie, with a great assumption of maternal dignity.

"I must say it never struck me that you intended to talk; I thought it was merely babbling, but of course that may be my ignorance. Perhaps you will be kind enough to enlighten me as to the meaning of that much used word—agoo."

"I shall do no such thing, for I can see you are sneering both at me and my child. I must say for a man who sets up to be a gentleman, it is an extremely curious way of behaving. I confess I should never have thought you capable of speaking to me in the way you have."

"For Goodness' sake, don't preach; I am much too tired to listen."

"Very well, then, if my conversation bores you I most certainly won't remain here any longer," saying which, May walked out of the room looking very injured, and kissing her son as she went, murmuring tenderly, "at any rate your mother loves you, my darling."

In spite however of the satisfaction of having enjoyed the last word, as she carried Baby to the nursery May felt a very queer feeling in her throat, and seemed to have developed a cold in the head, in a remarkably short space of time.

Having left Baby in Nurse's charge, and, much to that worthy woman's astonishment, having parted from him without any of those little endearments she was wont to use to him before doing so, she proceeded straight to her room.

"Well, I never did!" exclaimed Nurse, using that phrase, so much beloved by the lower orders of society, which says so little, but is intended to convey so much. "I never did! To think she should leave her first-born without so much as a parting blessing! Never mind, my sweetie, if your mother forsakes you, your old nurse never will. No, thank 'eaven, I tries to do my dooty by you, my hangel, and nought shall tempt my soul to go astray," and then, having delivered herself of these lofty and truly elevating sentiments, apropos of nothing in particular, she proceeded to undress and bathe the infant, feeling in that virtuous frame of mind we all enjoy when we have been saying anything very righteous and moral, whatever our acts may be.

In the meanwhile, the unfortunate object of Nurse's displeasure was sitting in her room, weeping bitterly, all her dignity and temper washed away by her tears. It must be acknowledged that it was some time before May arrived at this state of penitence. At first she could think of nothing but the contempt

with which she considered Jack had treated her son ; it was this, she told herself, that wounded her, even more than the way he had spoken to her. He had not kissed it when he came in, had expressed no desire to look at its mouth and judge for himself as to whether the tooth would be long in coming (which was what anyone with even a moderate share of fatherly feeling would have done), and, in fact, he had behaved disgracefully.

"Yes, disgracefully," she repeated to herself, as she sat by her window looking out into the winter's gloom, with flushed cheeks and eyes full of angry tears, which she was too proud to let fall, "disgracefully ; and so I shall tell him when I see him."

By-and-bye, however, her anger began to vanish, and her reflections with regard to Jack were of a milder description. Had she not been a little hasty with him ? After all, might he not, perhaps, have reason to complain ? Of course it was difficult to understand anyone being bored by Baby, with his funny little ways and odd little chuckle ; but still, what had her dear old mother said, when she had told her of her plan of bringing him up from his earliest infancy to be a great companion to his father, so that he should learn as soon as possible to enter into all his parent's plans ? "Take care, my dear," had been her mother's words, "that you don't give Jack too much of a good thing." Well, she had laughed at the time, but was there not some truth in the advice ? Perhaps poor Jack had come home tired, quite worn-out, and in no humour for Baby's company, so no wonder he had been a little impatient. There was no doubt he was really very good-tempered ; he could not have been feeling so bright as usual, or he would not have been annoyed. It was all her fault for teasing him with her nonsense, and she ought to be ashamed of herself. Yes, his health was rapidly being ruined, and it was entirely her own doing ; upon which, having arrived at this melancholy conclusion, she could no longer restrain her grief, but burst into a flood of tears.

It was at this stage of the proceedings, and while she was sobbing most vehemently, she felt her husband's strong arms round her, as he said gently :

"Don't cry, little woman. I'm awfully sorry for all I said."

Then, as she looked up at him with a loving though rather watery smile, he continued regretfully : "I can't think what made me behave to you as I did. I know I was an awful brute, but I was not feeling very fit ; not that that is any excuse for the way I spoke to you. But please forgive me, darling."

May's answer to this somewhat incoherent speech was to throw her arms round Jack's neck and give him a good hug, as she said impulsively : "Why, Jack, I want you to forgive me. I am so sorry I lost my temper."

"My dear, you have no reason to apologise," he replied. "I am sure I wonder you did not give it to me hot as I deserved, and

it is only because you are the dearest little girl that ever lived that you did not do so. But let us forget the unpleasant business and kiss and be friends," saying which, he suited the action to word, and the reconciliation was complete.

The only thing that now remained to be done was to pay a visit to the cause of all the trouble, and this was not forgotten, as after a minute or two May and Jack proceeded to the nursery, and as Baby happened to be enjoying his bottle, he chanced to be in a very good temper. Accordingly, when he saw his parents, he condescended to look up for a moment from his meal, and give them a most amiable smile—a little rapid, perhaps, but still very well-meaning, so that nothing was wanting to complete the family felicity.

After this little episode everything went considerably smoother. May realised that a man of thirty and an infant of four months are not very congenial companions, seeing they can hardly be said to have many ideas in common, and that the former decidedly objects to be deserted for the latter; whilst Jack on his part began to comprehend what an unfailing source of interest and amusement a baby is to womankind in general, and its mother in particular, and so learnt to make allowances for the raptures with which his wife viewed their child. Having arrived, therefore, at a better understanding on the subject, it never again caused any trouble, and if you were now to ask his parents about him, they would tell you that since that time Baby has never been anything to them but a bond of union.

E. K. H.

SONNET.

TO THE LADY M—— G——, ON HER TAKING THE VEIL.

LADY devout, who has from this world's taint
 Withdrawn thy life in cloister aye to dwell,
 And, for the sake of a soul-pitying saint,
 Wrapt thee in solemn weeds, invisible
 To eyes that erewhile on thy beauty fed,
 And, by thy virgin vow inviolate,
 Vanished for ever from them (as the dead
 Vanish from hearts they leave disconsolate):
 Since, therefore, thou hast thy dear self divorced
 From lover, parents, kindred—all who claimed
 Love's duty from thee,—whom thou hast enforced
 To weep for thee as dead, unknown, unnamed,
 Ah, whose is now the sorcer sacrifice,—
 Theirs with bereft, or thine with veiled, eyes?

A. C.

NURSE EVA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PHYLLIS," "MOLLY BAWN," "PORTIA," ETC.

A WARM bright day in golden Juue; a crowded Park; a rushing of dainty wind soft and pure, such as one seldom feels in this smoky London of ours; and over all a brilliant sun, grown drowsy now, as it seeks its rest, and sinks languorously into the fond arms of evening.

The stream of carriages is growing thinner; the Princess has disappeared. One young man, riding a handsome chestnut in a somewhat careless fashion, as though his thoughts were elsewhere, quits the Row, and turns towards the ugliest thing in creation. Having reached the Albert Memorial, he passes through the gate a little further on, and finds himself presently in the midst of a hopeless jangle, composed of cabs, hansoms, drags, and so forth.

Something in the jangle disagrees with the chestnut's temper. She starts, throws up her sleek head into the very midst of her master's day-dreams, makes a false step, and comes heavily to the ground, flinging her rider, with a horrible crash, right under the wheels of a passing carriage.

It is all done in a moment. There is a cry from the bystanders, a vain attempt to make a clear space, and then a senseless form, soiled and disfigured with dust and blood, is raised by half a dozen rough, if kindly, hands, and conveyed to the nearest hospital. They pull the bell, and the door being opened, they enter with their ghastly burden, and lay it down within the hall: it is all that remains of the careless gay young man, so full of happy life, who had left the Park only a short time ago.

The house-surgeon, passing through the hall at this moment, casts a sharp glance at the unsightly object on the bench.

"What is this?" asks he; and, coming nearer, bends over it. His face changes. "Good heavens! It is Sir Rawdon Dare!" he exclaims, in a horrified tone. "Send the matron here at once—See what has happened," he says presently, as a tall handsome woman comes hurriedly up to him. His tone, though low, is agitated.

"An accident?" says she, stooping, in turn, over the prostrate Baronet.

"And a very serious one. It is Sir Rawdon Dare. Is there a special ward?"

"One empty."

There is a touch of curiosity in her glance as she examines the death-like features beneath her.

"Let him be taken there. It is impossible he can be conveyed to his own house in his present state."

"It is a chance whether he will ever be conveyed there—alive," says the matron, turning away to give her orders.

"There is another thing," says the surgeon, detaining her. "He must have a careful nurse. You can recommend one from the wards?"

"Certainly," says the matron, pausing as if to consider. There is a good deal of kindly interest in her compassionate, if somewhat austere, face, as she gazes at the poor crushed figure; just as kindly, however, would she have looked at him had he been the veriest beggar that crawls our streets. "There is Nurse Eva," she says hastily; "she can undertake the case. She is both careful and sympathetic."

And now the wounded man, mercifully oblivious to his pain, is carried by experienced tender hands to a small private ward, and laid upon a bed. The doctors cluster round him. A young woman in hospital cap and apron comes quietly into the room, and stands beside the bed. She glances earnestly at her patient.

Surely that poor blood-bestained creature can have no life in him? There is a long pause; then one of the doctors, who has been stooping over the senseless figure, lifts his head.

"He is not dead—yet," he says. There is little or no hope in his tone.

After a long sleep, as it seemed to him, the sick man woke. He lay silently gazing at the four white walls of the small room in which that strange sleep had taken place, but without wondering why he was there. Thinking, as yet, was too great a task; and so he put it from him. The window was open, and beyond, in the outside distance, there was a waving of green branches, and from still farther on there came to him the subdued roar of unsubdued populace. Inside there was some very curious furniture—or, at least, so he thought it, as his languid glance travelled over it—a huge branch of crimson roses on a small table, a wicker chair, and a girl.

The girl's head was turned from him towards the window. Her body also slightly bent in its direction. It occurred to him that she must be lost in thought. The idle way in which her hands lay upon her lap helped him, too, to this conclusion.

As he watched her, a little sooty sparrow perched upon the window-sill, and looked at her knowingly out of his small eye. She rose, found some bread-crumbs in a funny little cupboard, and returned with them to the window. Of course, when she got there the bird was gone. She seemed in nowise disconcerted by this, but sat down and fell back again into her former thoughtful attitude, and then presently not one but three little sparrows

came and carried away some of her donation. She had not glanced at the bed when getting her crumbs, believing her patient to be dozing; but he, watching her with newly-opened eyes, had seen her face.

It was a revelation! It was beauty perfected! He lay quite still after he had seen it, dwelling with a drowsy pleasure on the remembrance of it until some minutes had gone by, and then a growing desire to see it again took possession of him. He felt still so weak and tired that he shrank from giving his voice sound, so, to attract her attention, he clutched feebly at the bedclothes, and then made a sorry effort to tap upon the quilt.

In a moment she was alert and eager. She came quickly to him, and bent over him.

"Why, this is good news," she said, in a low, exquisitely soft voice, and with a smile, "You are beginning to be yourself again, are you not? No, do not answer; I know what you would say; I understand you quite."

She laid her hand with a soothing touch upon his forehead; she settled his pillows, and then, going to the door, pressed her fingers on a knob in the wall outside. This brought the house-surgeon to her in a few minutes.

"Come," said he cheerily, nodding at the patient, "this is well; you are to be congratulated, nurse. Our patient is getting on, eh?—eh?"

He said "eh?" a good many times in a pondering fashion, and then took the nurse aside and whispered to her in quite a confidential manner. As he did so, it occurred to Sir Rawdon, in quite a feeble inconsequent way not to be accounted for, that he hated the house-surgeon! Nurse, he had called her. With that face—a nurse! Of course she wasn't a lady, poor thing; but with those little white slender hands to be—a nurse! And with that charming figure and that high-bred—"No, no, thanks, old man, nothing more. See you by and by at Lady Stanhope's. Look out, Alys: those bull-terriers are often treacherous—" and so on, again falling into the old delirious state, and babbling ever of this Alys, whose name had been so frequently on his lips all through his illness.

The nurse was at his side again directly.

"You must expect these little relapses for a while," said the surgeon with encouragement, patting her kindly on the shoulder.

Then there came a week when he felt much stronger, and could lie contentedly gazing at his nurse with certain recognition in his eyes, and no fear of its slipping away from him.

"When may I go?" he asked her suddenly one morning, when she was giving him his breakfast. His question was somewhat ungraciously put. He was, indeed, a little querulous at times;

but she, accustomed to the vagaries of sick people, didn't appear to mind it.

"Not for a short while yet," she said. She spoke to him with the intonation one might use to a fractious child, and with a lenient smile. "Are you tired of us already?"

"Not tired of you—no."

"But you want to get back to the other life? Of course it is only natural." Did a faint, faint sigh escape her here? "Your friends want to get you back there too?"

"It is hardly that," said he quickly. "It is more—that I want to feel myself—*myself* again. A *man*!—I am sick of coddling, and physic, and so forth."

This, too, was ungracious, and he knew it when the words had passed his lips. He glanced at her furtively, to see if he had offended her; and though he would have been miserable had he succeeded in paining her, he was still angrily disconcerted at finding she had taken no heed whatsoever of his petulance.

"It is a matter of indifference to her whether I am pleasant or the reverse," he said to himself, with a frown.

"I am afraid you must be content with us for a week or two longer," she said brightly. "But that should not be so great a hardship to you. In your present state, how could you be better off *there* than *here*?"

She was looking frankly into his eyes, and the beauty of her expression killed his small touch of rancour.

"I should be worse off," he said, flushing warmly; "I should be without my nurse."

"No; we supply nurses to private cases. You would probably have had one in your own home as good as I am," returned she calmly.

"Still, it wouldn't be you," said he. Then, "Do you like the life here?"

"Yes."

There was as much No as Yes in this answer, and it puzzled him.

"It is a hard life," he said.

"Most lives are hard," returned she sententiously.

This checked him for a time, but the demon of curiosity having made him his prey, he was compelled to go on again.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Nurse Eva."

"I know that. I shall never"—gratefully—"forget that. But your other name, I mean."

It had tormented him inconceivably in his sick moments to think it might be Smith or Jones.

There was a short, but eloquent pause. When it had gone by she turned and looked him fairly in the face.

"I have no other name," she said icily.

She got up from her seat, and moved towards the window.

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure!" exclaimed he, horror-stricken with shame at his mistake. "I assure you I didn't mean it—I—"

"If you excite yourself you will have a relapse, and not be able to leave us even as soon as I have said," interrupted she, with increasing coldness. "Think of the misery of *that*, and compose yourself."

A suspicion of scorn in her manner checked further speech on his part. He turned on his side and feigned slumber. But he could not get her face out of his thoughts. That last little touch of hauteur had become her. Strange to say—for one in her class—it had suited her, had seemed to belong to her of right! What a brute he was to ask her such a question! Surely she had a right to her own secrets; and yet—yet he wished now her name had been honest Jones or Smith, and that she had been able to say so.

But he had angered her, and could not sleep without her forgiveness. He was still so weak that sleep at all times was essential to him.

"Nurse," he said presently, in a tone that reminded him of the days when he was a schoolboy and in disgrace.

"Well," said she.

"I'm very sorry I said *that*," mumbled Sir Rawdon from beneath the bedclothes; "it was abominable of me."

He had now evidently come to the point when a good sound caning was reasonably to be expected.

"You want me to say I forgive you," said Nurse Eva softly, coming up to him again and looking down upon him. "Very good—I say it. Now go to sleep."

"You don't *look* as if you forgave," protested he anxiously. "If you could only know what I feel about it! You must think me so contemptible—and you so kind to me, and—"

"If that is all, be comforted. I do not think you contemptible," returned she; and even as she spoke a sweet soft smile overspread her lovely face, falling like a healing sunbeam on the repentant invalid. With a sigh of relief he closed his eyes, and sank into a refreshing slumber.

Then came a day when his nurse entered his room with a very jubilant air. Perhaps it was rather too jubilant an air.

"Rise, prisoner," said she; "the hour of your release has arrived."

He answered her with a reproachful glance, but no word.

She laid the little breakfast-tray upon the table near, and began to busy herself with its contents.

"It seems a shame to give you any trouble, now I am so strong again," he said. "And yet—I like to see you doing that."

" You like to see me getting your breakfast ready ? A very sensible fancy."

" You misunderstand me," he said hastily, and then stopped abruptly. It was difficult to go on with those large clear eyes fixed coldly upon him. And, after all, what was it he wanted to say ? Yet the very repellency of those eyes only made some vague unanalysed feeling within his breast the more unendurable.

" Eva," he said suddenly, with a vehemence that suggested hidden passion.

She laid her tiny teapot down slowly, without a suspicion of agitation, and turned her eyes fully upon his.

" *Nurse Eva!*" she said, with indescribable dignity.

She then gave him his tea, and arranged the tray as carefully as ever before him. If her hand trembled a little, she took very great care it should not be seen.

As for him, he seemed dissatisfied with all she gave him, and toyed discontentedly with his food, and finally told her, almost rudely, to take it away from him.

" This is foolish," she said gravely. " You will want strength for your removal. Try to eat something."

" The very thought of my removal takes away my appetite," retorted he sullenly, rejecting with angry persistence the little dainty trifle she sought to press upon him.

Then the surgeon came in again, and felt his pulse, and asked a question or two, and went through the usual formula.

" All going on as well as we could wish," he said at last. " You have, indeed, made a wonderful recovery, my dear Sir Rawdon. Give you my word, there was a time when—eh?—eh? Well, and so the carriage is to be here for you at twelve? Hah! glad to run away from us, eh?—eh?"

" Is it safe for me to move to-day?" asked Sir Rawdon languidly. There was no languor, however, in the deep anxiety of his eyes. " I don't think I feel so well as I did yesterday."

" Eh? what? Pouf! nonsense, my dear sir!" said the surgeon gaily. " Invalid's tremors, nothing more. I tell you, you are getting out of our hands more hopefully every moment. We shall be ashamed to prescribe for you soon."

" Perhaps if my going were to be postponed until—"

" Not at all—nothing of the kind. The very change will do you good," said the surgeon cheerily. " Come, come now—speak to him, nurse."

" But supposing I should have a relapse—that would be unpleasant," said this remarkably careful young man.

" Eh? How is this, nurse?" said the surgeon, somewhat perplexed by his patient's pertinacity."

As he appealed to her, Sir Rawdon raised himself slightly on his elbow, and appealed to her too—with his dark eyes. Her glance, passing from the surgeon's face to his, rested there for a moment.

There was entreaty, longing, hope, and something far more than all these in his gaze. She turned away from it slowly, but resolutely.

"There will be no fear of a relapse," she said to the surgeon, in cold measured tones, her eyes bent upon the ground. "It is better, *far* better he should go to-day, as arranged."

A swift change altered the expression of Sir Rawdon's face. Whereas before it was almost humbly imploring, it was now proud and stern.

"To-day, then, be it, by all means," he said, in a decided tone. "The sooner the better," after which he sank back with an angry jerk upon his pillow.

The surgeon laughed a little, and presently went away. The nurse busied herself in tidying the already scrupulously tidy room.

"In what mad haste you are to get rid of me!" said Sir Rawdon at last, finding the silence unbearable. How cold, how calm, how unfeeling she appeared with that beautiful unreadable face of hers!

"You see I have your interests at heart," she said.

"Mine?"

"Yes. Do you forget how you were pining for your freedom only a short two weeks ago? Now it lies before you."

"You are ungenerous," he said. Then more slowly, "A fortnight is a long time. One may learn many things in it."

"True. You have learned to get well," said she quietly.

"More than that!" He flushed a dark red, and held out his hand to her, "I have learned besides to——"

He paused with terrible, unmistakable sadness. The colour died from his face, and a quick pallor succeeded it. His very lips grew white because of the severity of his mental struggle. What was it he had been about to do? To tell this nameless girl—this worse than nameless girl, who was ashamed to declare aloud her honest appellation—that he loved her! To ask her to be his wife! He, a Dare, and the head of his house! His hand sank once more to his side, he breathed heavily, and at length, without looking at her, turned his face away from her to the wall. Here a bitter strife took place between his heart and him, but when it was ended his heart remained the victor, and he roused himself, and looked round for her.

Of her, however, he found the room empty. During that short but violent battle with prudence and affection, in which prudence had been slain, she had left him—had vanished, as it were. In her chair sat a probationer, a young woman with pale eyes and a snub nose, and a generally afflicted air. He had seen this probationer before, and had amused himself at odd moments counting the number of aspirates she could drop in half an hour. She spoke with a little snuffle in her throat, and was otherwise in many ways most hateful to him.

Now, the knowledge that Nurse Eva was never absent from him for longer than thirty minutes at a time became an intense consolation to him. She would soon be here, and that odious young woman would vacate her chair, in which it seemed a positive sacrilege that she should be allowed to sit. But the minutes crept on, and the half-hour grew into an hour, and the hour into two, and still the probationer sat on, and Nurse Eva made no sign.

The dragging hours were at first a bore to him, and at length became intolerable. And when the probationer rose, and declared it was time for him to rise, as the carriage would soon be here, and when a nurse from another ward came to assist her, he was almost rude to them both.

But time was inexorable and wore away, and at last the carriage was announced, and two or three of his friends and relations came in to congratulate him and help him down to it. The house-surgeon was present also, looking really pleased at his recovery. To him Sir Rawdon turned with a somewhat hurried air, and an amount of passionate anxiety he vainly tried to conceal.

"Where is Nurse Eva?" he said, his voice trembling slightly; "I cannot go until I bid her good-bye, and thank her—thank her for—"

He stopped, and cleared his throat huskily.

"I'm afraid you can't see her to-day," said the surgeon, cheerfully. "She has been somewhat overworked of late, you see; so when she asked the matron, a couple of hours ago, to give her a holiday to take a run down to Putney, or somewhere, you may be sure she got no refusal. The matron—indeed we *all* think a good deal of her, and she did seem pale and fatigued, poor girl, when she came down from your room about ten o'clock. I'm glad the day is so fine, both for your sake and hers. She said, by the bye, that you were so thoroughly convalescent that you would require her services no longer. She seemed to me in bad spirits—a little over-done, no doubt."

"No doubt," said Dare. He said even this with difficulty. Of course he understood it all! That brutal hesitation of his! What woman but would have taken fire beneath such an insult? His manner in itself was unbearable, presupposing as it did that if he uttered his proposal it would of a surety be accepted. With what sweet dignity she had behaved! She had uttered no taunt, had looked no scorn. She had only withdrawn herself, and taken measures to insure herself against the annoyance of ever being face to face with him again.

But it should not end here. Of that he was determined. He would at least see her once more, and compel her to believe that when his craven wavering had drawn to a close he knew himself to be hers, body and soul. He got down to the carriage some way, and was driven home.

But he was a good deal knocked up by the exertion of removing,

and suffered a slight relapse that kept him to his bed for a week or so. The old familiar scenes were now, too, changed to him, and touched him as being barren and wanting in many ways.

When he rallied a bit, and found himself in possession of a little of his former strength, the first use he made of it was to drive straight to the hospital. He was shown into the matron's room, where he thanked her courteously, if a little absently, for the care conferred upon him whilst under her roof. After that he said casually that he thought he should like to thank his nurse also. It was with a paling cheek he said this, and with eyes downcast.

"Nurse Eva?" said the matron. "O, she left us quite a fortnight ago. We were all so sorry to lose her, she was such an excellent nurse. I am sure you too, Sir Rawdon"—with a smile—"will have a good word for her on that score."

"Left!" It was all Sir Rawdon could say.

"Yes; almost the day after you did."

"You know her address, perhaps?"

When he asked this, he felt like a drowning man grasping at a straw, and he knew the straw would fail him.

"No," said the matron regretfully. She thought him a very kind young man. Gratitude, as a rule, is not an overpowering passion with the many. "But do not fret about that," she said. "I am sure she understood that you would wish to thank her. Yes, she was an excellent nurse—so sympathetic; we were sorry to lose her."

Sir Rawdon rose to bid her good-bye.

"I suppose Dr. Bland would not know her address?" he said.

"No, I am sure of that. She went away very suddenly—for family reasons, as she told me—and left no word with any one as to where she was going. Good-bye, Sir Rawdon; so glad to see you so thoroughly restored," &c.

Sir Rawdon, returning her farewell, told himself he was not so fully restored as she kindly imagined, and that his strength was by no means what it used to be.

It is a year and a half later, and Christmas Eve. There is no suspicion of invalidism about the tall handsome young man who, sitting in a first-class carriage, with a rather bored expression on his face, is being whirled swiftly northwards. He had checked his journey by spending one day in Edinburgh, and had felt it dull in the extreme. Even now, when he is hastening on to Aberdeen, the stupidity of his lonely stay there has not quite worn off. But he is always dull now, he tells himself, with a disdainful shrug of his broad shoulders, and grows moodier and moodier, until, his journey coming to an end, he finds himself on the chilly platform, with two gleaming carriage lamps awaiting him. The drive is a long one, and bitterly cold. The change from it to the soft brilliant warmth of a huge hall, hung with

many skins and bristling with antlers, is almost more than he can endure with fortitude. As in a dream, he follows the servant across the hall—rose-lit from two large shaded lamps upon the dark oak staircase beyond—and valiantly suppresses a desire to stay beside the huge log-fire for ever.

But the servant mercilessly marches him onwards, and presently he finds himself in a long, low, many-cornered room full of people, all more or less in the reposeful attitudes that border upon sleep. There is a soft sweet subdued hum of slumberous voices, a tender tinkling of delicate china, the music of many spoons. There are no rose-lamps in this room; nothing but the leaping light of a glorious fire that renders all things clear as day. The divan-looking lounges are covered with tartan, so are a good many of the men, and only a few of them have their nether limbs covered.

Sir Rawdon, still unthawed, stares idly round him. There is a pretty girl in a voluminous arm-chair, who nods brightly to him—Miss Adair; and another crouched picturesquely upon the bearskin rug before the fire, who stops her chatter for an instant to gaze at him curiously; and—

Good heavens! who is that? Who is that sitting over there, with her face, her figure, the very hands of *her*!

A slender creature, reclining in a low chair, and clad in an exquisite tea-gown—all satin and old lace. She is smiling. One arm, half naked, but mittened to the elbow, is lying gracefully across the arm of her lounge as she leans towards her neighbour; the other is trifling idly with a huge white fan.

Even as Dare gazes at her, spellbound, she laughs, softly, merrily, at some remark made to her by her companion—a red-headed young Scotchman. The laugh somewhat restores Sir Rawdon to his senses. Alas! *she* had never laughed; her lovely face had always been tinged with a deep melancholy. What madness possessed him to make him think he saw again before him the one woman he had ever loved—the only one he ever should love? And to dream of meeting her here, of all places! A hospital nurse as a guest at The Towers, in that gown, that—

“ Dear Sir Rawdon, so glad!” says his hostess—a tall handsome woman—at this moment, coming languidly forward with a smile and a graceful gesture. “ So nice to see you again.”

Sir Rawdon murmurs something to the effect that he is positively overpowered with joy at the idea of seeing *her* again; but his words sound vague and unmeaning—to himself, at least—and his eyes are not his own to deal with; they wander incessantly to the low chair and its lovely occupant, and will not be controlled. Who is the owner of that tea-gown?

“ I think you know everybody,” says Lady Dalruth, at the end of a long sentence, not one word of which he heard.

"Not quite all. I have not the happiness of knowing your pretty friend on the hearthrug, or—or the lady in the low chair over there."

"No? Well, time will cure that. The latter is my cousin, Miss Monteith. You would like to be introduced to her? Come, then."

"Evelyn dear, let me introduce to you Sir Rawdon Dare," she says a moment later.

Miss Monteith, turning slowly, lifts her eyes fully to Sir Rawdon's, and, after a calm comprehensive glance, makes him the very faintest salutation.

If he had ever seen this girl before, it is certain that she shows no recognition of ever having seen him. There is no surprised start, no faintest blush, no betraying pallor. Her little bow is cold in the extreme, but nevertheless civil. She answers his rather agitated remark with the utmost composure; it is some ordinary thing about the beauty of the scenery round, and hardly requires any acknowledgment save a bare "yes," to which she confines herself. If, indeed, some wild freak of Fate has suddenly changed the Nurse Eva—for whom he has been so persistently searching during all these past interminable months—into this stately repellent girl before him, she is so clad in an impenetrable armour of reserve that he cannot pierce it.

And, after all, is it she? Could even Fate play such a trick? Is not all this rather some cruelty of his imagination, born of his long dwelling on one engrossing desire?

Once or twice during the evening he tried to speak to her; but though she always answered him very gently, still her manner was so cold as to check on every occasion further conversation.

Dropping into the background, after a last defeat, he finds himself close to an old beau, a certain Sir Harry Loune, who is well known to everybody and to whom everybody is known.

"Wouldn't look at you, eh?" says this old gentleman, with a chuckle. "Don't take *that* to heart; more than you have got the same tale to tell. She won't look at any one, not even at the best *partis*. Pretty, isn't she? Good form, eh? Thing of the season next year, I shouldn't wonder. Lady Dalruth wanted right or wrong, to introduce her this year, but she wouldn't hear of it. Seems to shrink from publicity. No wonder, too; beauty has made itself so dooced vulgar of late," says the old gentleman, with a shrug of disgust.

"Yes?" says Dare calmly, but his look is in itself a question.

"She's charmin'—charmin'," goes on Sir Harry, when he has refreshed himself with a pinch of snuff, "and mysterious as she is lovely."

"Mysterious?"

"Rather, my dear boy! Mustn't say a word about it, you understand; but when she was about eighteen, her father, Sir

Pagan Monteith, you know—eh—what? Don't *want* to know? Ha, ha! Very good indeed! Well, he wished at that time to force her into a marriage with a most dilapidated person—an earl, notwithstanding—quite old enough to be *his* father. Girl wouldn't hear of this sacrifice at any price, and when pressed to it by angry parent, bolted—no one knows where, unless Lady Dalruth may. For three long years she remained incognita. Odd affair, isn't it? Nobody can explain it."

Dare thinks *he* could. Again the belief that Miss Monteith and his sweet nurse are one is full upon him; but he refrains from making his thoughts known to this old gossip.

"Why can't she say where she was, eh?" says Sir Harry, in a distinctly aggrieved tone; "this deadly silence is very injurious to her, eh?"

"Why should it be injurious to her?" asks Sir Rawdon fiercely.

He turns upon the old baronet with open wrath in his dark eyes. It is insufferable to hear her name bandied thus from lip to lip. And yet—*Her* name? *Whose* name? If he lets this madness overpower him, what will the end be? What has that haughty beauty over there to do with his gentle nurse? Seeing Sir Harry's look of amazement, he hastens to change his tone.

"She looks too proud to be a subject for calumny," he says confusedly, almost apologetically.

But the old scandal-monger has found him slow, and in nowise a kindred spirit; so he hobbles away from him to where Lady Dalruth is standing. Dare, too wearily disturbed in mind to find amusement in his present surroundings, follows his movements with idle uninterested eyes, but presently is attracted by something he hears him saying to his hostess.

"Left him at the point of death," said Sir Harry unctuously, "as *he* thought; but it was nothing of the kind. Gordon recovered almost immediately. One of the Gordons of Clayne, you know. Fellow who upset him was a cousin, and thought to come in for the property, d'ye see."

"One of the Gordons of Clayne" is a bosom friend of Sir Rawdon's, so naturally he pricks up his ears.

"What *did* happen to him?" asks Lady Dalruth, looking interested.

"Oh, mere trifle! Nothing vital, at all events. One fellow told me it was a broken clavicle; another a fractured humerus; but I haven't the faintest idea what either means."

"You should ask Evelyn for a translation," says Lady Dalruth, with a merry laugh.

Miss Monteith, who had been listening silently to the conversation, turns her eyes upon her. Is there entreaty or simple indifference in her glance? If entreaty, it comes too late; Lady Dalruth does not even see it.

"Miss Monteith?" asks Sir Harry.

"Yes. Didn't you know she has studied medicine, surgery, and all the rest of it?"

"You terrify me," says Sir Harry, with mock horror.

"That is quite a correct feeling for the occasion. She is really terribly learned. Aren't you, Evelyn?"

She smiles at the girl, as though in pleasant appreciation of a jest that is known to them alone. But Miss Monteith's return smile is forced and very faint.

"Learned? no. But I really *have* some taste for that sort of thing," she says quietly; and then turns away, as if anxious to terminate the conversation. In so doing, her eyes meet Dare's. There is a pause, in which each regards the other with a strange anxiety. Then the blood slowly mounts to Miss Monteith's brow, until all her lovely face is dyed a warm crimson. Her breath comes quickly; she wavers; then, with a last defiant, contemptuous glance, she moves away and sinks into a chair at the opposite end of the room.

But to Dare there is no longer even a chance for doubt. Just so had she looked at him when, in a moment's passion, he had called her "Eva" in the hospital, and she had coldly corrected him; just so, no doubt, her large, scornful eyes had rested upon him during that last fatal hour, when he had half declared his love, and had hesitated—and been lost.

With a terrible sinking of the heart he tells himself that he has sinned past forgiveness in her eyes.

The next morning all the world is clad with snow. The soft white fleecy carpet is covering the land far as the eye can see, and is lying heavily on branch and bough. The Christmas bells are chiming merrily. A soft grey mist is trembling between earth and sky. Over all, the merry sun is shining gaily. It is indeed an ideal Christmas morn.

Luncheon has come and gone, and they are all standing before the glowing fire in the billiard-room discussing the costumes to be worn at a fancy-dress ball, to be given in the neighbourhood some time in the ensuing month.

"One gets so tired of the art rags and the past centuries' gowns," says Lady Dalruth dejectedly. "O, for something new, something *bizarre*, out of the common! I'm sure I don't know what is to be done about Evelyn. She and I are quite worn out trying to imagine a costume that all the world hasn't seen a hundred times before. The anxiety has robbed me of my honest sleep for a fortnight past, I have so set my heart on making her a success. But each of my ideas only seems more crude than the last. Dear Sir Rawdon, do suggest something."

An uncontrollable impulse takes hold of Dare. He glances at Miss Monteith, to find she too is looking full at him that dreamy

touch of scorn that had offended him last night now wide awake within her large eyes. It spurs him to his half-determined purpose.

"Why not try the dress of a hospital nurse?" he says to Lady Dalruth, pale but smiling. "I don't recollect having ever seen it at a ball before, and I think the pretty little cap and apron would suit Miss Monteith admirably."

"Sir Rawdon! What *can* you know about hospital nurses?" says a pretty girl from the opposite side of the hearth-rug, with an amused laugh.

"Didn't you know I was in hospital for many weeks—summer before last—when I smashed myself up?" returns Sir Rawdon distinctly. I don't think I shall ever forget the kindness I received there; and at all events I know I shall never, under any circumstances, forget—my nurse."

"Ah, gratitude is a charming virtue!" says the pretty girl, with a second laugh. "Was it *her* cap and apron you were thinking of just now?"

"Yes. They are indelibly imprinted upon my brain." Again he glances at Miss Monteith. If she has grown a little whiter it is at least only perceptible to a lover's eyes.

"Do you know, the costume *sounds* well," she says quite calmly. "Let us think of it, Mirabel," turning to Lady Dalruth. "It is the one thing you desire—out of the common."

Lady Dalruth's answer is a little confused. Miss Monteith looks full at Sir Rawdon, her eyes dilate, and

"O, what a deal of scorn looks beautiful
In the contempt and anger of her lip!"

With a little passionate movement of the hand, unseen by all but him, she crosses the room with slow graceful step, and disappears through the doorway.

It takes Sir Rawdon but a moment to invent some idle speech, that leaves him, too, free to quit the apartment without arousing suspicion of the real motive of his departure.

Finding himself in the hall, he comes to a standstill, and asks himself what it is he means to do. He cannot forget that last glance of hers, or the passionate anger contained in it. He feels he would give half his possessions to be able honestly to hate her, but yet knows, by the sheer impossibility of his being able to do this, that he *loves* her.

As he stands irresolute, one of the footmen passes through the hall. Then and there a sudden resolution comes to Sir Rawdon. He will go to her, tell her all—lay bare his heart to her, and, if it must be, hear from her own lips the "No" that will blast his life for ever. *Anything* will be better than this crushing suspense.

"Where is Miss Monteith?" he asks the man as he goes by.

"In the library, sir. Saw her go in there just now."

Opening the library door he enters the room, and finds himself alone with her.

She is standing at the far window, and, with a little start, acknowledges his entrance. He would have gone to her, but with a certain impulsive eagerness she too moves and meets him half way. That her late anger is still warm within her eyes is known to him at the first glance.

"So—now you know me," she says defiantly, "are you satisfied? Is your curiosity satiated?"

"I knew you from the first moment. Was I likely to forget?"

"That is the bitterness of it," she says. "Are those three sad years of my life never to be obliterated?"

"From *my* mind, never! The few weeks I claim out of them were the happiest of my life."

"What brings you to me now?" demands she suddenly. "Is there more you would still learn as to the why and the wherefore of my going into hospital as a nurse? I warn you I shall give no explanation."

"I do not desire one," says Dare humbly; "I know all about it. Your father's tyranny; your escape from a marriage with that vile old man; your life in hospital—everything. Do you hate me the more because I know all this?"

"Hate you—no!" There is studied contempt in the curl of her lip. "Hatred is a strong sentiment; what I feel for you is only indifference."

She goes back to her former position in the window, as though to terminate the interview. But he, having "cast his all upon the die," makes one more effort for dear life. He follows her there.

"Even the worst criminals get a fair hearing," he says. "Let me plead my cause."

"No. It would be waste of time."

"At least tell me of what I stand accused."

"Listen, then!" exclaims she, turning to him with flashing eyes. "When unkind Fate sent you to that hospital a year and a half ago, and you saw me there day after day, a mere nurse, and—as you believed—unknown and obscure, you deigned to fancy yourself in love with me. Your momentary infatuation went even so far, that as the hour approached that was to put an end for ever to our intercourse with each other, driven by some puerile impulse, you deemed it even possible to declare your love, and offer me your name. But when it came to the point, you quailed; you drew back your half-uttered words; you shrank from allying yourself with one beneath you. *My* feelings were as nothing to you. Knowing myself scorned, rejected, without being afforded so much as the poor gratification of being able to refuse you, I left the room, hoping, *praying*

I might never see your face again. Do you think," with a painful sob, "I shall ever forgive all that?"

"Hear me."

"I will not. If your life, and heart, and title were all at my feet now, I——"

"They are at your feet."

"Then I reject them," returns she with vehemence.

"As you will. But at least you shall listen to what I have to say in my defence," says Dare with dignity. "That morning of which you speak—my last in the hospital—I truly meant, as you say, to tell you of my love."

"*Meant!* And then—you hesitated."

"I did," says Dare simply. "My name and the honour of my house is dear to me. Is it a crime beyond forgiveness that I should have paused before offering that name and honour to a woman who, though the most beautiful and lovable in the world, was still—unknown?"

"Why should you seek to excuse yourself?" interrupts Miss Monteith haughtily; "I know all that."

"There is, however, one thing that you do *not* know. You saw that I did battle with myself that morning, but you did not wait the termination of it. Love and duty fought a hard fight, but when it was over, you—that is Love—had won the victory; I raised my head again to tell you all—to *beseech* you to be my wife, but you were gone. Later on I searched for you everywhere; I advertised, all to no purpose. For eighteen months I sought for you—in vain."

Her face is turned away from him now, but a faint sound, that is either a sigh or a protest, escapes her.

"About all this you must believe me or not, as you will," says Dare quietly. "I have only my simple word to give you, but it is at least a word that has never yet been dishonoured. Will you not say *something* to me?"

"All I have to say has been said long ago. I cannot forgive you," says Miss Monteith, but as she says it she bursts into tears.

"I will not accept such words from your lips," exclaims Dare, with deep agitation. And then all in a moment his arms are round her and his cheek pressed to hers.

"Beloved," he says, "have pity upon me! Just think of it! You who have a name as old as mine, can you not understand the struggle I endured?"

"I can," murmurs she sadly; "and—yes, I honour you for it. But——" Here her voice fails. "O, if you could only know what I suffered!" she says, sobbing bitterly.

"I do know it. It was just *half* what I suffered," returns he, gravely. "O darling, put an end to my misery *now—here!* Of the two I am the more to be pitied, because if you still prove unkind my unhappiness will last for ever. Eva, speak to me."

"Evelyn," corrects she, softly.

"Ah, of course. But you must remember how long you have been 'Eva' to me. What an eternity lies in that year and a half! The very length of my wretchedness should buy my pardon."

"You are a special pleader," whispers she; and then she makes him a present of a little arch smile, and a tender glance from under her drenched lashes.

"Tell me you love me," persists he.

"I cannot—yet. There is first something——"

"Nothing that shall separate us," declares he stoutly.

"There may be. Who—who was that 'Alys' you were always raving about during that dreadful time when you were ill?"

"Alys! My sister, of course!" says he triumphantly. "Had a letter from her only yesterday. She has been in India with her husband for the past four years, or probably you would have seen her at the hospital during that lucky time when I was ill. Now, what have you got to say?" He is fast waxing into the wildest spirits.

"Nothing," returns she demurely; "so now let us go back to the others."

She makes a movement as though to go to the door, but he seizes her.

"O, yes, there is something!" he says, "and you sha'n't go without confessing it. Now then—you will marry me?"

"Yes."

"Soon?"

"Ye—es."

"And you are sure you love me?"

"As sure as sure can be!" says Miss Monteith solemnly, with a shameless disregard of maidenly reserve.

ADIEU !

ADIEU ! Sweet word of parting, which commends
All absent ones to God's own care for aye,
That to our aching hearts some comfort sends,
And o'er Life's pathway sheds a sun-lit ray.

Adieu ! Be this my prayer for thee, dear heart !
Should we in this world never meet again,
Still o'er our Past such gleams of sunshine dart,
As in the Future bright for aye shall reign.

THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

An Anecdotic Medley

BY "THORMANBY," AUTHOR OF "RACING MEN," ETC.

CHAPTER XV.

FEATS OF HORSEMANSHIP: IN THE RIDING SCHOOL AND OUT OF IT.

WHEN one has learned to ride well it is astonishing to find how much can be done on the back of a good, well-broken horse. Turpin's ride to York is often spoken of as an instance of good horsemanship and of endurance on the part of the animal, but modern researches have shown pretty conclusively that Turpin never did anything of the kind. Another man did accomplish that great ride, however, and the fact is thus related in "All the Year Round," under the title of "Old Stories Re-told":—

"The myth is founded on a real incident. In 1676 one Nicks, a robber haunting the road between Chatham and London to rob sailors returning to town with their pay and Kentish traders on their way to London, plundered a traveller at four o'clock in the morning on the slope of Gadshill, the spot immortalized by Shakespeare, and for ever associated with Falstaff's delightful poltroonery. Being on a blood mare, a splendid bay, Nicks determined to prove an *alibi* in case of danger. He rode off straight to Gravesend; there, detained an hour waiting for a boat, he prudently baited his horse; then, crossing the water, he dashed across Essex, full tilt to Chelmsford, rested half-an-hour and gave his horse some balls. Then he mounted, and flashed on to Bramborough, Bocking, and Wetherfield, fast across the downs to Cambridge, quick, by by-roads and across country, he slipped past Godmanchester and Huntingdon to Fenny Stratford, where he baited the good mare and took a quick half-hour's sleep. Then once more along the north road till the cathedral grew up over the horizon, larger—larger, and whiz—he darted through York Gate. In an instant he had led the jaded mare into an inn stable, snapped up some food, tossed off some generous life-giving wine, and in a fresh dress say, green velvet and gold lace—strode out gay and calm to the Bowling-green, then full of company. The lord mayor of the city happening to be there, Nicks sauntered up to him and asked him the hour. 'A quarter to eight.' 'Your most obedient.' When Nicks was apprehended and tried for the Gadshill robbery, the prosecutor swore to the man, the place, and

the hour; but Nicks brought the Lord Mayor of York to prove an *alibi*, and the jury, disbelieving in Sir Boyle Roche's bird anywhere out of Ireland, acquitted the resolute and sagacious thief."

But our object in this chapter is to present the reader with anecdotes of skilful riding rather than endurance on the part of either man or horse. Circus-riders acquire a particular kind of skill, fox-hunters acquire another kind, and soldiers are drilled into a certain dexterity of riding quite different from the other two.

Circus-riders have to begin early in life, and out of the youngsters who make a beginning there are few that get beyond mediocrity, and many of them gradually sink till they become tent men or stablemen. Of course, circus horses must be carefully trained as well as their riders; but any one who has been to the "Military Tournaments" of the last two or three years, and seen the "Musical Ride" of the Life Guards, and other feats of horsemanship performed by non-commissioned officers and men of our cavalry, must admit there are some splendid riders in the army. The way the horse would lie down and form a bulwark for the soldier to fire hisc arbine and perform other military exercises over its body has always excited a great deal of interest. But the French are not far behind our men in the riding school, if they are in the open, as the following description of some of their evolutions will show :—

"In 1865, when present at the opening of a French horse-show, in the Palace of Industry in the Champs Elysées, a troop of pupils of the cavalry school of Saumur appeared in the arena, dressed in the style of Louis XV. with small three-cornered hats with ostrich plumes, green and gold coats, white leather breeches, and black boots, mounted on well-bred horses. They commenced by drawing up in a line, at foot-pace *passaging* (mōving sideways) in front of the Emperor's box, each man as he passed saluting by raising his plumed hat; the horses keeping an exact line, every foot rising along the line at the same moment—a performance I had often seen attempted at professional hippodromes, but never with horses so fine or men so admirably trained. Other feats followed, the least successful of which was the leaping of low hurdles. After this very pretty exhibition, the troop retired, and presently returned, mounted on fat Norman horses, with buckskin demi-piqued saddles, without stirrups, their manes plaited with ribbons, their tails plaited and tied on one side; in a word, an exact reproduction of the horses and pupils of the Marquis of Newcastle. After saluting the Emperor they proceeded to execute *ballotades*, *caprioles*, and other tricks. In a ballotade the horse jumps off the ground bending both knees and houghs, and showing his hind shoes without kicking out. In the capriole the horse does the same, and kicks out with both hind legs."

Hunting-men of course have not as a general rule been through

military schools, nevertheless they can, on occasion, make a very pretty display of riding. They at all events know how to stick to their saddles, how to fall off when necessary, and how to guide and humour a high-spirited horse in the midst of a crowd. As an intance of what determined hunting-men can do the following anecdote is related :—

“ When in the year 1815 Blucher arrived in London and drove at once to Carlton House, I was one of a few out of an immense concourse of horsemen who accompanied his carriage from Shooter’s Hill, riding on each side. Spite of all obstacles we forced our way through the Horse Guards gates and the troop of guardsmen ; in like manuer through the light cavalry and the gate at Carlton House, as well as the *posse* of constables in the courtyard, and drove our horses up the flight of stone steps into the saloon, though the guards, beef-eaters and constables, arrayed themselves against the irruption of Cossacks, and actually came to the charge. The Prince, however, in the noblest manner waved his hand, and we were allowed to form a circle round the Regent while Blucher had the blue ribbon placed on his shoulders and was assisted to rise by the Prince in the most dignified manner. His Royal Highness then slightly acknowledged our presence, we backed to the door and got down the steps again with only one accident, that arising from a horse, which, on being urged forward, took a leap down the whole flight of stairs.”

Turning from civilized Europe to the semi-barbarous people of the world we find that :—

“ The Mexicans and South Americans are all good riders, and they constantly perform feats of horsemanship which would do credit to the Bedouins themselves. It is a common amusement for them to turn a horse at full speed upon a point designated by a blanket ; they will charge a solid rampart with the rapidity of lightning, and stop so suddenly that the feet of the horse will exactly touch the wall. For a small wager some have been known to rush at a cliff, rear their horses’ fore-legs in the air, so that they would for a moment tremble over the dread precipice, and then whirl round into safety. The Arabs, to show Layard (the explorer of Nineveh) their great estimation of his person, on one occasion amused themselves by similar equestrian feats. They would gallop off to a distance, put their lances at rest, and then make deliberately for his head. The compliment consisted in stopping the charger suddenly short so that the spear point would just touch his face. He naively adds that his life would have been sacrificed if the well-trained steeds had made the slightest false step, or by any inequality in the ground disappointed the expectations of their masters. But the feat which shows most completely the high training of the horse is that which Darwin saw performed in Chili many years ago. The rider held the reins loosely in his left hand and dashed at full speed up to a post

previously prepared, and made the horse execute a complete wheel round it, while, with his right arm extended at full length, he kept one finger just touching the post. Having completed the circuit a *demi-volte* was executed, the reins were transferred to the right hand, and without pause the horse wheeled round the post in the opposite direction, the rider keeping a finger of the other hand in contact with it."

The Oriental nations, Moors, Turks, Egyptians and Persians, are good horsemen, and once on the back of a horse, it is not easy for the animal to dislodge his rider if he chances to be tolerably well schooled to riding. His late Majesty George IV., when Prince of Wales, witnessed a specimen of Egyptian horsemanship which is thus described by one who was present :—

" On the 10th of November, 1803, a grand entertainment was given to his Excellency, Elfi Bey, and a number of other distinguished visitors, by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. The conversation turning upon the very excellent equestrian powers of the Mamelukes and Turks, the Prince said :—‘I have now in my stud an Egyptian horse so wild and ungovernable that he will dismount the best horseman in Elfi Bey’s retinue.’ The Bey replied in Italian to the Prince :—‘I shall gratify your Royal Highness’s curiosity to-morrow.’ An appointment consequently took place next day at two o’clock in the Prince of Wales’s riding-house, Pall Mall, when the Bey, accompanied by Colonel Moore, his interpreter, and Mahomet Aga, his principal officer, a young man of apparently great agility, entered the riding-house where the Prince and his royal brothers waited, attended by several noblemen, to witness the management of the horse, which never before could be ridden by anybody. One of the Mameluke’s saddles being fixed by the grooms, the animal was led out of the stable into the riding-house, in so rampant and unmanageable a state that every one present concluded that no one would ever attempt to mount him. There was never a greater model of equine beauty, he was spotted like a leopard, and his eyes were so fiery and enraged as to indicate the greatest danger to any one who dared to mount him. Being led round the boundary, Mahomet Aga made a spring, seized him by the reins, and in an instant vaulted on the back of the animal, which, finding itself encumbered by a burden that it never had before felt, and goaded by the tightness of the Egyptian saddle, gave loose to his passion, and in the height of his ferocity plunged, but in vain, in every direction. The Mameluke kept his seat during this outbreak of temper for more than twenty minutes, to the utter astonishment of the Prince and every beholder : at last the apparently ungovernable animal was reduced to so tame a state as to yield to the control of the rider. The Prince expressed himself highly gratified, and greatly complimented the officer on his equestrian skill.”

The wild and semi-wild horses of Australia have already been mentioned. Their riders, the stock-keepers, are good horsemen, though perhaps not up to the tricks just described. They are fine rough riders, however, and they had need be, for chasing the wild horses in Australia is a most exciting and dangerous pastime, as the following account proves. A wild black stallion that had coaxed away several mares from a sheep-run was to be captured, and this was the way in which it was done:—

"Our search commenced in a heavily-timbered flat, which gradually sloped down to a running stream, swollen by recent rains, beyond which, in a succession of rocky ridges, rose a range of mountains, with stony inaccessible peaks, where the winter snow long rests, the sides by turns bare and dark with forests and matted brush, divided by deep ravines, carved out by floods. It was at a spring in this flat that Long Peter, while cutting out some wild honey with a black, had caught sight of the wild horse.

"It had been arranged that Charley, whose nag was a fast but not a lasting one, should take up the running as soon as he came in sight of our prey and keep as close to the best horse—the black stallion, if possible—as he could. John was to follow, keeping Charley just in sight and pushing to the left or right, as occasion might require. Robert and Philip were to take up the running as soon as the first two were blown, and I was to act under their orders. Three distinct cracks of a whip were to be a signal for pushing on, while the same signal was to be continually repeated when the thicket closed the view, in order that we might follow the right track. 'And mind, Barnard,' said Robert to me, 'keep sight of us, but don't press your horse in going over difficult ground, trust all to him; and if you get lost, give him his head, and he will take you to some stockman's hut, as he knows everyone on these mountains. And now look to your girths, and take up your stirrups two holes, for if we find here we shall have to ride like the devil.'

"Having thus prepared, we spread in a half-circle and paced slowly through the forest, with our eyes on the ground. Huge trunks of fallen trees in various stages of decay, and deep pits where the roots had been torn up, crossed our path in every direction. But my horse twisted by, or leaped over, these obstacles with a perfection of instinct that left me nothing to do but preserve my seat, and keep a look-out worthy of my apprenticeship as a bushman.

"Half-an-hour elapsed and no sign of anything, when a low whistle from Philip brought us to a halt. We pressed towards him. He had dismounted, and pointed to the fresh tracks of several unshod horses, among which that of a foal was visible. With signs he bade us follow, and marched on foot, leading his horse, with his eyes on the ground, noting every sign. At some richer herbage he stopped, passed his hand over it, and gathered

up a tuft of grass. ‘They are close by,’ he whispered, ‘this is fresh cropped, and damp from a horse’s mouth.’ ‘Mount, then,’ said Dawood, ‘they will be drinking at the Black Swan water hole; give them a few moments to fill themselves, and then, Charley, don’t spare your old horse; the black is worth a hundred of him.’ Let’s make a circuit beyond Paddy Ryan’s pool, and then ride up the bed of the creek.’

“Charley nodded without answering, for he was just letting out his girths a hole, thinking he had hauled them too tight. For my part, I was red and pale by turns; my teeth chattered as they used to at the side of the gorse covers.

“We started, reached the running water, slid into it at one of the cattle runs, and rode up, splash, splash, in Indian file. There had been a good deal of rain the week before, and the snow had melted on the top of the mountain range, so that the stream, which since I have seen scarcely sufficient to chain the water holes with a thin thread, rose to our horses’ bellies, and rattled past drowning the sound of our cavalcade, until, rounding a miniature promontory, our leader halted and held up his hand. Looking through a clump of bush, we could see the black stallion standing up to his knees in a pool, drinking, snorting, and pawing the water into foam—a splendid picture of beauty and strength. As he was turned from us we could just see his small ears peeping above a mane that descended on both sides his massive, arching neck, down to his knees, as from time to time he shook it, and played with two mares, a grey and a chestnut, which drank and meekly admired their lord from a little distance, while another black mare moved slowly up a cattle path towards the mountains, with a yearling colt trotting at her heels. Charley had to get clear from the spreading branches of a fallen tree before he could be seen. The stallion looked up as a bough cracked loudly, and Charley’s horse appeared within twenty yards; then, turning, he stared for a moment with his fierce, fiery eyes through his wet, hanging locks, and with a shrill neigh of warning that re-echoed from the mountains like the voices of a hundred horses, the steed of steeds dashed up the breast of a precipitous mountain track, followed by the black mare, the others flying in an opposite direction. At the same moment Charley’s spurs were dashed into his horse’s sides, his head turned up a shorter and easier exit from the stream, and quick as thought he was at speed, thundering and rolling down stones and gravel upon us. More leisurely we followed; the hunter and the hunted disappeared behind the first hill, to reappear almost immediately on a narrow path worn by wild cattle along the mountain side—a glorious, frightful sight. But we neither saw nor felt any danger.

“‘Hold hard, and sit back, Armorer,’ was all I heard from Robert, as we rushed away, our eyes fixed on the flying stallion. Scarcely did I notice then the broken chasms, the huge boulders,

the narrow, crumbling rocks, over which, goat-like, my horse made his way. Mad with excitement, on we bounded, where a stumble would have been certain death. At length, at a wave of the hand from Robert, turning to a more circuitous and safer path, I lost sight of my companions, and, pulling on my horse at a slow trot, I crowned the heights and came upon a low level green gorge of galloping ground, where I rejoined Paginton and Robert, and could see Charley and John just disappearing round a bend. Pressing on steadily over turf, level as a bowling green, no doubt the bed of some primæval water-course, we again caught sight of the stallion, Charley's mare at his quarters, seemingly almost within reach of the glorious beast. Presently the gorge began to close up; a solid wall of rock, higher than a cathedral tower, loomed before us. ‘Hurrah, hurrah!’ I shouted. ‘He's pounded!’

“Hold your tongue!” cried Robert. “You'll need breath before night. There's a road to the bottom that will make us sweat before we've done.” Presently we saw the dark shadow of a horse and horseman appear for an instant on a crag above us, as he emerged from a narrow defile, which under the wall of solid rock wound from the gorge along which we had been racing. As we turned into the defile the smooth ground ceased, and we rattled over a mere sheep-track against the breast of the mountain. We saw the stallion disappearing far above us over the crest of the mountain, and could hear Charley's signal of distress. Philip pushed on crying, ‘Save your horse, Armorer, till you get to good ground.’ And in a few minutes I was alone, but soon overtook Charley, whose horse had fallen at a tree, and did not seem much inclined to get up again. He waved his whip, and I trotted slowly on, doubting if I should see anything more of the stallion or the party. At length I reached the top, and hearing a ‘coo-ey-ing,’ I made towards a cattle track, and found Robert waiting for me.

“I see,” said he, “that the black horse will make for the flats below; at the next turn we can see for miles, so you will be sure to hit him off if your Wallaby's wind holds out, and Paginton does not manage him before he gets down, which I don't think he will without your help.”

“This speech gave me new heart. I took a pull at my little horse, touched him with the spur, and found him strong and full of pace. At length we crowned the crest of the dividing range, and paused for a moment before descending the steep gulf that offered the only path downwards. From below rose through the silent air, from time to time, the distant reports of the stock whips, re-echoing from the basalt rocks louder and louder, and then dying away.

“These sounds, and the sight of the boundless plain, half maddened me. I dashed down the steep watercourse, my horse

bounding like a deer from boulder to boulder. ‘On!’ I cried, ‘on, Rob!’ ‘Steady, steady!’ shouted my Australian friend, in a clear calm voice of command, ‘or you’ll kill your horse if you don’t break your neck. We are sure of him now, if you will only save up your impatience a little longer. Pull up, Barnard, this moment, and follow me.’ There was no disobeying common sense and command together. He then took the lead, and leaning back on the saddle till my head nearly touched the horse’s counter, leaving the reins loose, leaping, standing, now walking, now gently trotting, I followed the best bushman in the colony.

“ Robert’s consummate bushmanship led him the true course, even when we were going fastest; every cattle-track was familiar to him. At length we cleared the broken path, and from a sort of green plateau caught another glimpse of the plain below.

“ ‘Now,’ said Robert, ‘you can’t miss your way; keep to the left a little—I’ll to the right, and we shall have him between us, for Phil and John must be beat by this time. Your path is short and easy, give your horse a moment to wind, then don’t spare him.’ So saying, and with a wave of his whip, he turned short to the right, and dashed down towards the plain. Then I gave my nag his head, and started once more. Before I had cantered a hundred yards Wallaby turned sharply, pushed through some thick brushwood, tearing one leg of my trowsers to tatters, and came upon a cattle-track which soon brought me to a road of nature’s making. I then reached a belt of forest that divided me from the plain, through which my horse brought me on the glorious grassy desert just in time to see in the horizon Philip and John waving their hats to Robert, who about a quarter of a mile on my right was taking up the running.

“ ‘Hurrah, hurrah!’

“ ‘Yoicks! Tally-ho! Hark forward, away!’ Standing up in my stirrups, my eyes fixed upon the speck which instinct told me was our chase, I bounded along over the sward. Very soon the black stallion showed nearer and nearer; he still made a good fight, and struggled bravely, but at three-quarter speed I gained on him at every stride. Now, sure of my prey, I gave vent to my pent-up feelings. I screamed, shouted, and waved my cap as though I had been cheering on a pack of hounds, running in view.

“ Robert, sparing neither whip nor spur, was seeking to weary him out, by heading him again and again; but his own steed was done, and he beckoned me on just as the good chestnut stumbled and rolled over like a log. ‘All right,’ cried he, standing over his beaten horse, ‘push on, Barnard, now’s your time.’ So I left him. In five minutes I found I could ride round the wild horse, so I pressed on him constantly. At every wave of my whip he doubled like a beaten hare, but showed his teeth when I headed him, and glared with fiery eyes that showed it would not be safe

to come to close quarters. Thus pressing and doubling we carried on for some miles, until the stallion's pace became a trot, and sometimes a walk, but still, whenever I neared him, he showed dangerous fight. While doubting how to end the conflict, I saw something looming in the distance that proved to be a lot of tame stock horses driven by a boy towards a neighbouring station. The boy—a true cornstalk—saw how the game stood, pushed on to join me, and together, one on each side, we dashed, shouting and lashing at the stallion. His tail shivering, his sides heaving, he vainly tried to escape a fresh horse and rider; wherever he bounded we followed, and before he knew where he was, had him entangled in the mob of tame ones. This done, I shouted ‘Victory!’—young Cornstalk something more homely and energetic—and then, flogging, hurrying, trampling in a cloud of dust, we drove the lot pell-mell into a stock-yard. The slip rails were closed in an instant, and the black stallion, after one fierce, despairing leap at the lofty palings, sank exhausted to the ground.

* * * * *

“I shall not spin out this adventure by telling how we tamed the wild stallion, and drove in both mares and cattle and made good profit by the transaction. It is enough to say that this rubbed off all the remains of my *new chummetry*; from that time I was received as a bushman.”

THE MAN FROM ARCHANGEL.

ON the fourth day of March, in the year 1867, I being at that time in my five-and-twentieth year, I wrote down the following words in my note-book—the result of much mental perturbation and conflict :—

“The solar system, amidst a countless number of other systems as large as itself, rolls ever silently through space in the direction of the constellation of Hercules. The great spheres of which it is composed spin and spin through the eternal void ceaselessly and noiselessly. Of these one of the smallest and most insignificant is that conglomeration of solid and of liquid particles which we have named the earth. It whirls onwards now as it has done before my birth, and will do after my death—a revolving mystery, coming none know whence, and going none know whither. Upon the outer crust of this moving mass crawl many mites, of whom I, John McVittie, am one, helpless, impotent, being dragged aimlessly through space. Yet such is the state of things amongst us that the little energy and glimmering of reason which I possess is entirely taken up with the labours which are necessary in order to procure certain metallic disks, wherewith I may purchase the chemical elements necessary to build up my ever-wasting tissues, and keep a roof over me to shelter me from the inclemency of the weather. I thus have no thought to expend upon the vital questions which surround me on every side. Yet, miserable entity as I am, I can still at times feel some degree of happiness, and am even—save the mark!—puffed up occasionally with a sense of my own importance.”

These words, as I have said, I wrote down in my note-book, and they reflected accurately the thoughts which I found rooted far down in my soul, ever present and unaffected by the passing emotions of the hour. Every day for seven months I read over my words, and, every day when I had finished them, I said to myself, “Well done, John McVittie, you have said the thought which was in you. You have reduced things to their least common measure!” At last came a time when my uncle, McVittie of Glencairn, died—the same who was at one time chairman of committees of the House of Commons. He divided his great wealth among his many nephews, and I found myself with sufficient to provide amply for my wants during the remainder of

my life, and became at the same time owner of a bleak tract of land upon the coast of Caithness, which I think the old man must have bestowed upon me in derision, for it was sandy and valueless, and he had ever a grim sense of humour. Up to this time I had been an attorney in a midland town in England. Now I saw that I could put my thoughts into effect, and, leaving all petty and sordid aims, could elevate my mind by the study of the secrets of nature. My departure from my English home was somewhat accelerated by the fact that I had nearly slain a man in a quarrel, for my temper was fiery, and I was apt to forget my own strength when enraged. There was no legal action taken in the matter, but the papers yelped at me, and folk looked askance when I met them. It ended by my cursing them and their vile, smoke-polluted town, and hurrying to my northern possession, where I might at last find peace and an opportunity for solitary study and contemplation. I borrowed from my capital before I went, and so was able to take with me a choice collection of the most modern philosophical instruments and books, together with chemicals and such other things as I might need in my retirement.

The land which I had inherited was a narrow strip, consisting mostly of sand and extending for rather over two miles round the coast of Mansie Bay, in Caithness. Upon this strip there had been a rambling, grey-stone building—when erected or wherefore none could tell me—and this I had repaired, so that it made a dwelling quite good enough for one of my simple tastes. One room was my laboratory, another my sitting-room, and in a third, just under the sloping roof, I slung the hammock in which I always slept. There were three other rooms, but I left them vacant, except one which was given over to the old crone who kept house for me. Save the Youngs and the McLeods, who were fisher-folk living round at the other side of Fergus Ness, there were no other people for many miles in each direction. In front of the house was the great bay, behind it were two long barren hills, capped by other loftier ones beyond. There was a glen between the hills, and when the wind was from the land it used to sweep down this with a melancholy sough and whisper among the branches of the fir trees beneath my attic window.

I dislike my fellow-mortals. Justice compels me to add that they appear for the most part to dislike me. I hate their little crawling ways, their conventionalities, their deceits, their narrow rights and wrongs. They take offence at my brusque outspokenness, my disregard for their social laws, my impatience of all constraint. Among my books and my drugs in my lonely den at Mansie I could let the great drove of the human race pass onwards with their politics and inventions and tittle-tattle, and I remained behind stagnant and happy. Not stagnant either, for I was working in my own little groove, and making progress. I

have reason to believe that Dalton's atomic theory is founded upon error, and I know that mercury is not an element.

During the day I was busy with my distillations and analyses. Often I forgot my meals, and when old Madge summoned me to my tea I found my dinner lying untouched upon the table. At night I read Bacon, Descartes, Spinoza, Kant—all those who have pried into what is unknowable. They are all fruitless and empty, barren of result, but prodigal of polysyllables, reminding me of men who, while digging for gold, have turned up many worms and then exhibit them exultantly as being what they sought. At times a restless spirit would come upon me and I would walk thirty and forty miles without rest or breaking fast. On these occasions, when I used to stalk through the country villages, gaunt, unshaven and dishevelled, the mothers would rush into the road and drag their children indoors, and the rustics would swarm out of their pot-houses to gaze at me. I believe that I was known far and wide as the "mad laird o' Mansie." It was rarely, however, that I made these raids into the country, for I usually took my exercise upon my own beach, where I soothed my spirit with strong black tobacco, and made the ocean my friend and my confidant.

What companion is there like the great restless, throbbing sea? What human mood is there which it does not match and sympathise with? There are none so gay but that they may feel gayer when they listen to its merry turmoil, and see the long green surges racing in, with the glint of the sunbeams in their sparkling crests. But when the grey waves toss their heads in anger, and the wind screams above them, goading them on to madder and more tumultuous efforts, then the darkest-minded of men feels that there is a melancholy principle in Nature which is as gloomy as his own thoughts. When it was calm in the Bay of Mansie the surface would be as clear and bright as a sheet of silver, broken only at one spot some little way from the shore, where a long black line projected out of the water looking like the jagged back of some sleeping monster. This was the top of the dangerous ridge of rocks known to the fishermen as the "ragged reef o' Mansie." When the wind blew from the east the waves would break upon it like thunder, and the spray would be tossed far over my house and up to the hills behind. The bay itself was a bold and noble one, but too much exposed to the northern and eastern gales, and too much dreaded for its reef, to be much used by mariners. There was something of romance about this lonely spot. I have lain in my boat upon a calm day, and peering over the edge I have seen far down the flickering ghostly forms of great fish—fish, as it seemed to me, such as naturalist never knew, and which my imagination transformed into the genii of that desolate bay. Once, as I stood by the brink of the waters upon a quiet night, a great cry, as of a woman in hope-

ess grief, rose from the bosom of the deep, and swelled out upon the still air, now sinking and now rising, for a space of thirty seconds. This I heard with my own ears.

In this strange spot, with the eternal hills behind me and the eternal sea in front, I worked and brooded for more than two years unpestered by my fellow men. By degrees I had trained my old servant into habits of silence, so that she now rarely opened her lips, though I doubt not that when twice a year she visited her relations in Wick, her tongue during those few days made up for its enforced rest. I had come almost to forget that I was a member of the human family, and to live entirely with the dead whose books I pored over, when a sudden incident occurred which threw all my thoughts into a new channel.

Three rough days in June had been succeeded by one calm and peaceful one. There was not a breath of air that evening. The sun sank down in the west behind a line of purple clouds, and the smooth surface of the bay was gashed with scarlet streaks. Along the beach the pools left by the tide showed up like gouts of blood against the yellow sand, as if some wounded giant had toilfully passed that way, and had left these red traces of his grievous hurt behind him. As the darkness closed in, certain ragged clouds which had lain low on the eastern horizon coalesced and formed a great irregular cumulus. The glass was still low, and I knew that there was mischief brewing. About nine o'clock a dull moaning sound came up from the sea, as from a creature who, much harassed, learns that the hour of suffering has come round again. At ten a sharp breeze sprang up from the eastward. At eleven it had increased to a gale, and by midnight the most furious storm was raging which I ever remember upon that weather-beaten coast.

As I went to bed the shingle and seaweed was patterning up against my attic window, and the wind was screaming as though every gust were a lost soul. By that time the sounds of the tempest had become a lullaby to me. I knew that the grey walls of the old house would buffet it out, and for what occurred in the world outside I had small concern. Old Madge was usually as callous to such things as I was myself. It was a surprise to me when, about three in the morning, I was awoke by the sound of a great knocking at my door and excited cries in the wheezy voice of my housekeeper. I sprang out of my hammock, and roughly demanded of her what was the matter.

"Eh, maister, maister!" she screamed in her hateful dialect. "Come doun, mun; come doun! There's a muckle ship gaun ashore on the reef and the pairt folks are a' yammerin' and ca'in' for help—and I doobt they'll a' be drooned. Oh, maister McVittie, come doun!"

"Hold your tongue, you hag!" I shouted back in a passion. "What is it to you whether they are drowned or not? Get back to your bed and leave me alone." I turned in again and drew the blankets over me. "Those men out there," I said to myself, "have already gone through half the horrors of death. If they be saved they will but have to go though the same once more in the space of a few brief years. It is best therefore that they should pass away now, since they have suffered that anticipation which is more than the pain of dissolution." With this thought in my mind I endeavoured to compose myself to sleep once more, for that philosophy which had taught me to consider death as a small and trivial incident in man's eternal and everchanging career, had also broken me of much curiosity concerning worldly matters. On this occasion I found, however, that the old leaven still fermented strongly in my soul. I tossed from side to side for some minutes endeavouring to beat down the impulses of the moment by the rules of conduct which I had framed during months of thought. Then I heard a dull roar amid the wild shriek of the gale, and I knew that it was the sound of a signal-gun. Driven by an uncontrollable impulse, I rose, dressed, and, having lit my pipe, walked out on to the beach.

It was pitch dark when I came outside, and the wind blew with such violence that I had to put my shoulder against it and push my way along the shingle. My face prangled and smarted with the sting of the gravel which was blown against it, and the red ashes of my pipe streamed away behind me dancing fantastically through the darkness. I went down to where the great waves were thundering in, and shading my eyes with my hand to keep off the salt spray, I peered out to sea. I could distinguish nothing, and yet it seemed to me that shouts and great inarticulate cries were borne to me by the blasts. Suddenly as I gazed I made out the glint of a light, and then the whole bay and the beach were lit up in a moment by a vivid blue glare. They were burning a coloured signal-light on board of the vessel. There she lay on her beam ends right in the centre of the jagged reef, hurled over to such an angle that I could see all the planking of her deck. She was a large, two-masted schooner, of foreign rig, and lay perhaps a hundred and eighty or two hundred yards from the shore. Every spar and rope and writhing piece of cordage showed up hard and clear under the livid light which sputtered and flickered from the highest portion of the forecastle. Beyond the doomed ship out of the great darkness came the long rolling lines of black waves, never ending, never tiring, with a petulant tuft of foam here and there upon their crests. Each as it reached the broad circle of unnatural light appeared to gather strength and volume, and to hurry on more impetuously until,

with a roar and a jarring crash, it sprang upon its victim. Clinging to the weather shrouds I could distinctly see some ten or twelve frightened seamen, who when their light revealed my presence, turned their white faces towards me and waved their hands imploringly. I felt my gorge rise against these poor cowering worms. Why should they presume to shirk the narrow pathway along which all that is great and noble among mankind has travelled? There was one there who interested me more than they. He was a tall man who stood apart from the others, balancing himself upon the swaying wreck as though he disdained to cling to rope or bulwark. His hands were clasped behind his back and his head was sunk upon his breast, but even in that despondent attitude there was a litheness and decision in his pose and in every motion which marked him as a man little likely to yield to despair. Indeed, I could see by his occasional rapid glances up and down and all around him that he was weighing every chance of safety, but though he often gazed across the raging surf to where he could see my dark figure upon the beach, his self respect or some other reason forbade him from imploring my help in any way. He stood, dark, silent and inscrutable, looking down on the black sea and waiting for whatever fortune Fate might send him.

It seemed to me that that problem would very soon be settled. As I looked, an enormous billow, topping all the others and coming after them, like a driver following a flock, swept over the vessel. Her foremast snapped short off, and the men who clung to the shrouds were brushed away like a swarm of flies. With a rending, riving sound the ship began to split in two, where the sharp back of the Mansie reef was sawing into her keel. The solitary man upon the forecastle ran rapidly across the deck and seized hold of a white bundle which I had already observed but failed to make out. As he lifted it up, the light fell upon it, and I saw that the object was a woman, with a spar lashed across her body and under her arms in such a way that her head should always rise above water. He bore her tenderly to the side and seemed to speak for a minute or so to her, as though explaining the impossibility of remaining upon the ship. Her answer was a singular one. I saw her deliberately raise her hand and strike him across the face with it. He appeared to be silenced for a moment or so by this, but he addressed her again, directing her, as far as I could gather from his motions, how she should behave when in the water. She shrank away from him but he caught her in his arms. He stooped over her for a moment and seemed to press his lips against her forehead. Then a great wave came welling up against the side of the breaking vessel, and leaning over he placed her upon the summit of it as gently as a child might be committed to its cradle. I saw her white dress flickering among the foam on the crest of the dark billow, and then the

light sank gradually lower, and the riven ship and its lonely occupant were hidden from my eyes.

As I watched those things my manhood overcame my philosophy and I felt a frantic impulse to be up and doing. I threw my cynicism to one side as a garment which I might don again at leisure, and I rushed wildly to my boat and my sculls. She was a leaky tub, but what then? Was I, who had cast many a wistful, doubtful glance at my opium bottle, to begin now to weigh chances and to cavil at danger. I dragged her down to the sea with the strength of a maniac and sprang in. For a moment or two it was a question whether she could live among the boiling surge, but a dozen frantic strokes took me through it, half full of water but still afloat. I was out on the unbroken waves now, at one time climbing, climbing up the broad black breast of one, then sinking down, down on the other side, until looking up I could see the gleam of the foam all around me against the dark heavens. Far behind me I could hear the wild wailings of old Madge, who, seeing me start thought, no doubt, that my madness had come to a climax. As I rowed I peered over my shoulder, until at last on the belly of a great wave which was sweeping towards me I distinguished the vague white outline of the woman. Stooping over I seized her as she swept by me and with an effort lifted her, all sodden with water, into the boat. There was no need to row back, for the next billow carried us in and threw us upon the beach. I dragged the boat out of danger, and then lifting up the woman I carried her to the house, followed by my housekeeper, loud with congratulation and praise.

Now that I had done this thing a reaction set in upon me. I felt that my burden lived, for I heard the faint beat of her heart as I pressed my ear against her side in carrying her. Knowing this I threw her down beside the fire which Madge had lit, with as little sympathy as though she had been a bundle of faggots. I never glanced at her to see if she were fair or no. For many years I had cared little for the face of a woman. As I lay in my hammock upstairs, however, I heard the old woman as she chafed the warmth back into her, crooning a chorus of "Eh, the puir lassie! Eh, the bonnie lassie!" from which I gathered that this piece of jetsam was both young and comely.

The morning after the gale was peaceful and sunny. As I walked along the long sweep of sand I could hear the panting of the sea. It was heaving and swirling about the reef, but along the shore it rippled in gently enough. There was no sign of the schooner, nor was there any wreckage upon the beach, which did not surprise me as I knew there was a great undertow in those waters. A couple of broad-winged gulls were hovering and skimming over the scene of the shipwreck, as though many strange things were visible to them beneath the waves. At times

I could hear their raucous voices as they spoke to one another of what they saw.

When I came back from my walk the woman was waiting at the door for me. I began to wish when I saw her that I had never saved her, for here was an end of my privacy. She was very young—at the most nineteen, with a pale, somewhat refined face, yellow hair, merry blue eyes and shining teeth. Her beauty was of an ethereal type. She looked so white and light and fragile that she might have been the spirit of that storm-foam from out of which I plucked her. She had wreathed some of Madge's garments round her in a way which was quaint and not unbecoming. As I strode heavily up the pathway, she put out her hands with a pretty child-like gesture, and ran down towards me, meaning, as I surmise, to thank me for having saved her, but I put her aside with a wave of my hand and passed her. At this she seemed somewhat hurt and the tears sprang into her eyes, but she followed me into the sitting-room and watched me wistfully.

"What country do you come from?" I asked her suddenly.

She smiled when I spoke, but shook her head.

"Francais?" I asked. "Deutsch?" "Espagnol?"—each time she shook her head and then she rippled off into a long statement in some tongue of which I could not understand one word.

After breakfast was over, however, I got a clue to her nationality. Passing along the beach once more, I saw that in a cleft of the ridge a piece of wood had been jammed. I rowed out to it in my boat, and brought it ashore. It was part of the sternpost of a boat, and on it, or rather on the piece of wood attached to it, was the word "Archangel," painted in strange, quaint lettering. "So," I thought, as I paddled slowly back, "this pale damsel is a Russian. A fit subject for the White Czar and a proper dweller on the shores of the White Sea!" It seemed to me strange that one of her apparent refinement should perform so long a journey, in so frail a craft. When I came back into the house, I pronounced the word "Archangel," several times in different intonations, but she did not appear to recognise it.

I shut myself up in the laboratory all the morning, continuing a research which I was making upon the nature of the allotropic forms of carbon and of sulphur. When I came out at midday for some food, she was sitting by the table with a needle and thread, mending some rents in her clothes, which were now dry. I resented her continued presence, but I could not turn her out on the beach to shift for herself. Presently she presented a new phase of her character. Pointing to herself and then to the scene of the shipwreck, she held up one finger, by which I understood her to be asking whether she was the only one saved. I nodded my head to indicate that she was. On this she sprang out of the chair, with a cry of great joy, and holding the garment which she was mending over her head and swaying it from side to side with

the motion of her body, she danced as lightly as a feather all round the room, and then out through the open door into the sunshine. As she whirled round she sang in a plaintive shrill voice some uncouth barbarous chant, expressive of exultation. I called out to her, "Come in, you young fiend, come in and be silent!" but she went on with her dance. Then she suddenly ran towards me, and catching my hand before I could pluck it away, she kissed it. While we were at dinner, she spied one of my pencils, and taking it up she wrote the two words "Sophie Ramusine" upon a piece of paper and then pointed to herself as a sign that that was her name. She handed the pencil to me, evidently expecting that I would be equally communicative but I put it in my pocket as a sign that I wished to hold no intercourse with her.

Every moment of my life now I regretted the unguarded precipitancy with which I had saved this woman. What was it to me whether she had lived or died? I was no young hot-headed youth to do such things. It was bad enough to be compelled to have Madge in the house, but she was old and ugly and could be ignored. This one was young and lively, and so fashioned as to divert attention from graver things. Where could I send her, and what could I do with her? If I sent information to Wick it would mean that officials and others would come to me, and pry, and peep and chatter—a hateful thought. It was better to endure her presence than that.

I soon found that there were fresh troubles in store for me. There is no place safe from the swarming, restless race of which I am a member. In the evening, when the sun was dipping down behind the hills, casting them into dark shadow, but gilding the sands and casting a great glory over the sea, I went, as is my custom, for a stroll along the beach. Sometimes on these occasions I took my book with me. I did so on this night, and stretching myself upon a sand-dune I composed myself to read. As I lay there I suddenly became aware of a shadow which interposed itself between the sun and myself. Looking round, I saw to my great surprise a very tall, powerful man, who was standing a few yards off, and who, instead of looking at me, was ignoring my existence completely, and was gazing over my head with a stern set face at the bay and the black line of the Mansie reef. His complexion was dark, with black hair and short, curling beard, a hawk-like nose, and golden earrings in his ears—the general effect being wild and somewhat noble. He wore a faded velveteen jacket, a red-flannel shirt, and high sea boots, coming half-way up his thighs. I recognised him at a glance as being the same man, who had been left on the wreck the night before.

"Hullo!" I said, in an aggrieved voice. "You got ashore all right then?"

"Yes," he answered, in good English. "It was no doing of mine. The waves threw me up. I wish to God I had been

allowed to drown!" There was a slight foreign lisp in his accent which was rather pleasing. "Two good fishermen, who live round yonder point, pulled me out and cared for me—yet I could not honestly thank them for it."

"Ho! ho!" thought I, "here is a man of my own kidney. Why do you wish to be drowned?" I asked.

"Because," he cried, throwing out his long arms with a passionate, despairing gesture, "there—there in that blue smiling bay, lies my soul, my treasure—everything that I loved and lived for."

"Well, well," I said. "People are ruined every day, but there's no use making a fuss about it. Let me inform you that this ground on which you walk is my ground, and that the sooner you take yourself off it the better pleased I shall be. One of you is quite trouble enough."

"One of us?" he gasped.

"Yes—if you could take her off with you I should be still more grateful."

"He gazed at me for a moment as if hardly able to realise what I said, and then with a wild cry he ran away from me with prodigious speed and raced along the sands towards my house. Never before or since, have I seen a human being run so fast. I followed as rapidly as I could, furious at this threatened invasion, but long before I reached the house he had disappeared through the open door. I heard a great scream from the inside, and as I came nearer the sound of the man's bass voice speaking rapidly and loudly. When I looked in the girl, Sophie Ramusine, was crouching in a corner, cowering away, with fear and loathing expressed on her averted face and in every line of her shrinking form. The other, with his dark eyes flashing, and his outstretched hands quivering with emotion, was pouring forth a torrent of passionate pleading words. He made a step forward to her as I entered, but she writhed still further away, and uttered a sharp cry like that of a rabbit when the weazel has him by the throat.

"Here!" I said, pulling him back from her. "This is a pretty to-do! What do you mean? Do you think this is a way-side inn or place of public accommodation?"

"Oh, sir," he said, "excuse me. This woman is my wife and I feared that she was drowned. You have brought me back to life."

"Who are you?" I asked roughly.

"I am a man from Archangel," he said simply: "a Russian man."

"What is your name?"

"Ourganeff."

"Ourganeff!—and hers is Sophie Ramusine. She is no wife of yours. She has no ring."

"We are man and wife in the sight of Heaven," he said

solemnly, looking upwards. "We are bound by higher laws than those of earth." As he spoke the girl slipped behind me and caught me by the other hand, pressing it as though beseeching my protection. "Give me up my wife, sir," he went on. "Let me take her away from here."

"Look here, you—whatever your name is," I said sternly, "I don't want this wench here. I wish I had never seen her. If she died it would be no grief to me. But as to handing her over to you, when it is clear she fears and hates you, I won't do it. So now just clear your great body out of this, and leave me to my books. I hope I may never look upon your face again."

"You won't give her up to me?" he said hoarsely.

"I'll see you damned first!" I answered.

"Suppose I take her," he cried, his dark face growing darker.

All my tigerish blood flushed up in a moment. I picked up a billet of wood from beside the fireplace. "Go," I said, in a low voice; "go quick, or I may do you an injury." He looked at me irresolutely for a moment, and then he left the house. He came back again in a moment, however, and stood in the doorway looking in at us.

"Have a heed what you do," he said. "The woman is mine, and I shall have her. When it comes to blows, a Russian is as good a man as a Scotchman."

"We shall see that," I cried, springing forward, but he was already gone, and I could see his tall form moving away through the gathering darkness.

For a month or more after this things went smoothly with us. I never spoke to the Russian girl, nor did she ever address me. Sometimes when I was at work in my laboratory she would slip inside the door and sit silently there watching me with her great eyes. At first this intrusion annoyed me, but by degrees, finding that she made no attempt to distract my attention, I suffered her to remain. Encouraged by this concession, she gradually came to move the stool on which she sat nearer and nearer to my table, until after gaining a little every day during some weeks, she at last worked her way right up to me, and used to perch herself beside me whenever I worked. In this position she used, still without ever obtruding her presence in any way, to make herself very useful by holding my pens, test-tubes, bottles, &c., and handing me whatever I wanted, with never-failing sagacity. By ignoring the fact of her being a human being, and looking upon her as a useful automatic machine, I accustomed myself to her presence so far as to miss her on the few occasions when she was not at her post. I have a habit of talking aloud to myself at times when I work, so as to fix my results better in my mind. The girl must have had a surprising memory for sounds, for she could always repeat the words which I let fall in this way, without, of course, understanding in the least what they meant. I

have often been amused at hearing her discharge a volley of chemical equations and algebraic symbols at old Madge, and then burst into a ringing laugh when the crone would shake her head, under the impression, no doubt, that she was being addressed in Russian.

She never went more than a few yards from the house, and, indeed, never put her foot over the threshold without looking carefully out of each window in order to be sure that there was nobody about. By this I knew that she suspected that her fellow-countryman was still in the neighbourhood, and feared that he might attempt to carry her off. She did something else which was significant. I had an old revolver with some cartridges, which had been thrown away among the rubbish. She found this one day, and at once proceeded to clean it and oil it. She hung it up near the door, with the cartridges in a little bag beside it, and whenever I went for a walk, she would take it down and insist upon my carrying it with me. In my absence she would always bolt the door. Apart from her apprehensions she seemed fairly happy, busying herself in helping Madge when she was not attending upon me. She was wonderfully nimble-fingered and natty in all domestic duties.

It was not long before I discovered that her suspicions were well founded and that this man from Archangel was still lurking in the vicinity. Being restless one night I rose and peered out of the window. The weather was somewhat cloudy, and I could barely make out the line of the sea, and the loom of my boat upon the beach. As I gazed, however, and my eyes became accustomed to the obscurity, I became aware that there was some other dark blurr upon the sands, and that in front of my very door, where certainly there had been nothing of the sort the preceding night. As I stood at my diamond-paned lattice still peering and peeping to make out what this might be, a great bank of clouds rolled slowly away from the face of the moon, and a flood of cold, clear, light was poured down upon the silent bay and the long sweep of its desolate shores. Then I saw what this was which haunted my doorstep. It was he, the Russian. He squatted there like a gigantic toad, with his legs doubled under him in strange Mongolian fashion, and his eyes fixed apparently upon the window of the room in which the young girl and the housekeeper slept. The light fell upon his upturned face, and I saw once more the hawk-like grace of his countenance, with the single deeply-indented line of care upon his brow, and the protruding beard which marks the passionate nature. My first impulse was to shoot him as a trespasser, but, as I gazed, my resentment changed into pity and contempt. "Poor fool," I said to myself, "is it then possible that you, whom I have seen looking open-eyed at present death, should have your whole thoughts and ambition centred upon this wretched slip of a girl—a girl, too, who flies from you and hates you. Most women

would love you—were it but for that dark face and great handsome body of yours—and yet you must needs hanker after the one in a thousand who will have no traffic with you." As I returned to my bed I chuckled much to myself over this thought. I knew that my bars were strong and my bolts thick. It mattered little to me whether this strange man spent his night at my door or a hundred leagues off, so long as he was gone by the morning. As I expected, when I rose and went out there was no sign of him, nor had he left any trace of his midnight vigil.

It was not long, however, before I saw him again. I had been out for a row one morning, for my head was aching, partly from prolonged stooping and partly from the effects of a noxious drug which I had inhaled the night before. I pulled along the coast some miles, and then, feeling thirsty, I landed at a place where I knew that a fresh water stream trickled down into the sea. This rivulet passed through my land, but the mouth of it, where I found myself that day, was beyond my boundary line. I felt somewhat taken aback when rising from the stream at which I had slaked my thirst I found myself face to face with the Russian. I was as much a trespasser now as he was, and I could see at a glance that he knew it.

"I wish to speak a few words to you," he said, gravely.

"Hurry up, then!" I answered, glancing at my watch. "I have no time to listen to chatter."

"Chatter!" he repeated, angrily. "Ah, but there. You Scotch people are strange men. Your face is hard and your words rough, but so are those of the good fishermen with whom I stay, yet I find that beneath it all there lies kind honest natures. No doubt you are kind and good, too, in spite of your roughness."

"In the name of the devil," I said, "say your say, and go your way. I am weary of the sight of you."

"Can I not soften you in any way," he cried. "Ah, see—see here"—he produced a small Grecian cross from inside his velvet jacket. "Look at this. Our religions may differ in form, but at least we have some common thoughts and feelings when we see this emblem."

"I am not so sure of that," I answered.

He looked at me thoughtfully.

"You are a very strange man," he said at last. "I cannot understand you. You still stand between me and Sophie. It is a dangerous position to take, sir. Oh, believe me, before it is too late. If you did but know what I have done to gain that woman —how I have risked my body, how I have lost my soul. You are a small obstacle to some which I have surmounted—you, whom a rip with a knife, or a blow from a stone, would put out of my way for ever. But, God preserve me from that," he cried, wildly. "I am deep—too deep—already. Anything rather than that."

"You would do better to go back to your country," I said, "than

to skulk about these sand hills and disturb my leisure. When I have proof that you have gone away I shall hand this woman over to the protection of the Russian Consul, at Edinburgh. Until then, I shall guard her myself, and not you, nor any Muscovite that ever breathed, shall take her from me."

"And what is your object in keeping me from Sophie?" he asked. "Do you imagine that I would injure her? Why, man, I would give my life freely to save her from the slightest harm. Why do you do this thing?"

"I do it because it is my good pleasure to act so," I answered. "I give no main reasons for my conduct."

"Look here!" he cried, suddenly blazing into fury, and advancing towards me with his shaggy mane bristling and his brown hands clenched. "If I thought you had one dishonest thought towards this girl—if for a moment I had reason to believe that you had any base motive for detaining her—as sure as there is a God in Heaven I should drag the heart out of your bosom with my hands." The very idea seemed to have put the man in a frenzy, for his face was all distorted and his hands opened and shut convulsively. I thought that he was about to spring at my throat.

"Stand off," I said, putting my hand on my pistol. "If you lay a finger on me I shall kill you."

He put his hand into his pocket, and for a moment I thought that he was about to produce a weapon too, but instead of that he whipped out a cigarette and lit it, breathing the smoke rapidly into his lungs. No doubt he had found by experience that this was the most effectual way of curbing his passions.

"I told you," he said in a quieter voice, "that my name is Ourganeff—Alexis Ourganeff. I am a Finn by birth, but I have spent my life in every part of the world. I was one who could never be still, nor settle down to a quiet existence. After I came to own my own ship there is hardly a port from Archangel to Australia which I have not entered. I was rough and wild and free, but there was one at home, sir, who was prim and white-handed and soft tongued, skilful in little fancies and conceits which women love. This youth by his wiles and tricks stole from me the love of the girl whom I had ever marked as my own, and who up to that time had seemed in some sort inclined to return my passion. I had been on a voyage to Hammerfest for ivory, and coming back unexpectedly I learned that my pride and treasure was to be married to this soft-skinned boy, and that the party had actually gone to the church. In such moments, sir, something gives way in my head, and I hardly know what I do. I landed with a boat's crew—all men who had sailed with me for years, and who were as true as steel. We went up to the church. They were standing, she and he, before the priest, but the thing had not been done. I dashed

between them and caught her round the waist. My men beat back the frightened bridegroom and the lookers on. We bore her down to the boat and aboard our vessel, and then getting up anchor we sailed away across the White Sea until the spires of Archangel sank down behind the horizon. She had my cabin, my room, every comfort. I slept among the men in the forecastle. I hoped that in time her aversion to me would wear away and that she would consent to marry me in England or in France. For days and days we sailed. We saw the North Cape die away behind us, and we skirted the grey Norwegian coast, but still in spite of every attention she would not forgive me for tearing her from that pale-faced lover of hers. Then came this cursed storm which shattered both my ship and my hopes, and has deprived me even of the sight of the woman for whom I have risked so much. Perhaps she may learn to love me, yet. You, sir," he said wistfully, "look like one who has seen much of the world. Do you not think that she may come to forget this man and to love me?" "I am tired of your story," I said, turning away. "For my part I think you are a great fool. If you imagine that this love of yours will pass away you had best amuse yourself as best you can until it does. If on the other hand it is a fixed thing you cannot do better than cut your throat, for that is the shortest way out of it. I have no more time to waste on the matter." With this I hurried away and walked down to the boat. I never looked round, but I heard the dull sound of his feet upon the sands as he followed me.

"I have told you the beginning of my story," he said, "and you shall know the end some day. You would do well to let the girl go."

I never answered him but pushed the boat off. When I had rowed some distance out I looked back and saw his tall figure upon the yellow sand as he stood gazing thoughtfully after me. When I looked again some minutes later he had disappeared.

For a long time after this my life was as regular and as monotonous as it had been before the shipwreck. At times I hoped that the man from Archangel had gone away altogether, but certain footsteps which I saw upon the sand, and more particularly a little pile of cigarette ash which I found one day behind a hillock from which a view of the house might be obtained, warned me that, though invisible, he was still in the vicinity. My relations with the Russian girl remained the same as before. Old Madge had been somewhat jealous of her presence at first, and seemed to fear that what little authority she had would be taken away from her. By degrees, however, as she came to realise my utter indifference, she became reconciled to the situation, and, as I have said before, profited by it, as our visitor performed much of the domestic work.

And now I am coming near the end of this narrative of mine, which I have written a great deal more for my own amusement than for that of anyone else. The termination of the strange episode in which these two Russians had played a part, was as wild and as sudden as the commencement. The events of one single night freed me from all my troubles, and left me once more alone with my books and my studies, as I had been before their intrusion. Let me endeavour to describe how this came about.

I had had a long day of heavy and wearying work, so that in the evening I determined upon taking a long walk. When I emerged from the house my attention was attracted by the appearance of the sea. It lay like a sheet of glass, so that never a ripple disturbed its surface. Yet the air was filled with that indescribable moaning sound which I have alluded to before—a sound as though the spirits of all those who lay beneath those treacherous waters were sending a sad warning of coming troubles to their brethren in the flesh. The fishermen's wives along that coast know the eerie sound, and look anxiously across the waters for the brown sails making for the land. When I heard it I stepped back into the house and looked at the glass. It was down below 29°. Then I knew that a wild night was coming upon us.

Underneath the hills where I walked that evening it was dull and chill, but their summits were rosy-red and the sea was brightened by the sinking sun. There were no clouds of importance in the sky, yet the dull groaning of the sea grew louder and stronger. I saw, far to the eastward, a brig beating up for Wick, with a reef in her topsails. It was evident that her captain had read the signs of nature as I had done. Behind her a long, lurid haze lay low upon the water, concealing the horizon. "I had better push on," I thought to myself, "or the wind may rise before I can get back."

I suppose I must have been at least half-a-mile from the house when I suddenly stopped and listened breathlessly. My ears were so accustomed to the noises of nature, the sighing of the breeze and the sob of the waves, that any other sound made itself heard at a great distance. I waited, listening with all my ears. Yes, there it was again—a long-drawn, shrill cry of despair, ringing over the sands and echoed back from the hills behind me—a piteous appeal for aid. It came from the direction of my house. I turned and ran back homewards at the top of my speed, ploughing through the sand, racing over the shingle. In my mind there was a great dim perception of what had occurred.

About a quarter of a mile from the house there is a high sand-hill, from which the whole country round is visible. When I reached the top of this I paused for a moment. There was the

old grey building—there the boat. Everything seemed to be as I had left it. Even as I gazed, however, the shrill scream was repeated, louder than before, and the next moment a tall figure emerged from my door—the figure of the Russian sailor. Over his shoulder was the white form of the young girl, and even in his haste he seemed to bear her tenderly and with gentle reverence. I could hear her wild cries and see her desperate struggles to break away from him. Behind the couple came my old housekeeper, staunch and true, as the aged dog, who can no longer bite, still snarls with toothless gums at the intruder. She staggered feebly along at the heels of the ravisher, waving her long, thin arms, and hurling, no doubt, volleys of Scotch curses and imprecations at his head. I saw at a glance that he was making for the boat. A sudden hope sprang up in my soul that I might be in time to intercept him. I ran for the beach at the top of my speed. As I ran I slipped a cartridge into my revolver. This I determined should be the last of these invasions.

I was too late. By the time I reached the water's edge he was a hundred yards away, making the boat spring with every stroke of his powerful arms. I uttered a wild cry of impotent anger, and stamped up and down the sands like a maniac. He turned and saw me. Rising from his seat he made me a graceful bow, and waved his hand to me. It was not a triumphant or a derisive gesture. Even my furious and distempered mind recognised it as being a solemn and courteous leave-taking. Then he settled down to his oars once more, and the little skiff shot away out over the bay. The sun had gone down now, leaving a single dull, red streak upon the water, which stretched away until it blended with the purple haze on the horizon. Gradually the skiff grew smaller and smaller as it sped across this lurid band, until the shades of night gathered round it and it became a mere blur upon the lonely sea. Then this vague loom died away also and darkness settled over it—a darkness which should never more be raised.

And why did I pace the solitary shore, hot and wrathful as a wolf whose whelp has been torn from it? Was it that I loved this Muscovite girl? No—a thousand times no. I am not one who, for the sake of a white skin or a blue eye, would belie my own life, and change the whole tenor of my thoughts and existence. My heart was untouched. But my pride—ah, there I had been cruelly wounded. To think that I had been unable to afford protection to the helpless one who craved it of me, and who relied on me! It was that which made my heart sick and sent the blood buzzing through my ears.

That night a great wind rose up from the sea, and the wild waves shrieked upon the shore as though they would tear it back with them into the ocean. The turmoil and the uproar were congenial to my vexed spirit. All night I wandered up and down,

wet with spray and rain, watching the gleam of the white breakers and listening to the outcry of the storm. My heart was bitter against the Russian. I joined my feeble pipe to the screaming of the gale. "If he would but come back again!" I cried with clenched hands, "If he would but come back!"

He came back. When the grey light of morning spread over the Eastern sky, and lit up the great waste of yellow, tossing waters, with the brown clouds drifting swiftly over them, then I saw him once again. A few hundred yards off along the sand there lay a long dark object, cast up by the fury of the waves. It was my boat, much shattered and splintered. A little further on, a vague, shapeless something was washing to and fro in the shallow water, all mixed with shingle and with seaweed. I saw at a glance that it was the Russian, face downwards and dead. I rushed into the water and dragged him up on to the beach. It was only when I turned him over that I discovered that she was beneath him, his dead arms encircling her, his mangled body still intervening between her and the fury of the storm. It seemed that the fierce German Sea might beat the life from him, but with all its strength it was unable to tear this one-idea'd man from the woman whom he loved. There were signs which led me to believe that during that awful night the woman's fickle mind had come at last to learn the worth of the true heart and strong arm which struggled for her and guarded her so tenderly. Why else should her little head be nestling so lovingly on his broad breast, while her yellow hair entwined itself with his flowing beard? Why too should there be that bright smile of ineffable happiness and triumph, which death itself had not had power to banish from his dusky face? I fancy that death had been brighter to him than life had ever been.

Madge and I buried them there on the shores of the desolate northern sea. They lie in one grave deep down beneath the yellow sand. Strange things may happen in the world around them. Empires may rise and may fall, dynasties may perish, great wars may come and go, but, heedless of it all, those two shall embrace each other for ever and aye, in their lonely shrine by the side of the sounding ocean. I sometimes have thought that their spirits flit like shadowy sea-mews over the wild waters of the bay. No cross or symbol marks their resting place, but old Madge puts wild flowers upon it at times, and when I pass on my daily walk and see the fresh blossoms scattered over the sand, I think of the strange couple who came from afar, and broke for a little space the dull tenor of my sombre life.

A. CONAN DOYLE.

GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R.A.

(With a Portrait.)

WHEN G. F. Watts commenced his art-career it was far from being the fashion to sneer at the old masters, nor did it then require, as it would now, courage as well as faith to express the strong admiration with which he studied them, humbly, ardently and reverentially, imbibing from them a spirit of patient industry and ambitious boldness akin to their own.

He was born in 1818, a year made memorable by the union of the Duke of Kent with the Princess Victoria of Saxe Coburg, and was a native of London. At an early age he won his way into the Royal Academy as a student. His earliest professional efforts took the form of portrait painting, that branch of art which, being most intimately associated with our passions and affections, is here, at any rate, most encouraged; and while yet a mere boy he obtained admission to the exhibition of the Royal Academy. This was in 1837, and his successful pictures were three in number, two being portraits and one a study from a wounded heron.

That year's exhibition was made famous by containing works from the studios of Sir David Wilkie, Etty, Edward Landseer, Macilise, Turner, Leslie, Calcott, William, father of our popular novelist Wilkie Collins, Cooper, Eastlake, Rippingille, Westall, Stanfield, unjustly forgotten Hayter, and the gracefully artificial A. E. Chalon. High and excellent company for the hard-working proudly exultant boy-artist. Turner had sent his "Juliet and her Nurse," which did not escape ridicule for bad drawing and extravagance, although his wonderful mastery of air, light, and colour was then fairly recognised. Wilkie had sent his celebrated "Peep-o'-day Boy's Cabin," Leslie his "Autolyces," and Stanfield his big "Battle of Trafalgar," painted for the United Service Club. Cope was also present, then, like Watts, young and obscure, although seven years his senior.

Soon after the persevering efforts of poor Haydon had borne fruit in the Government's determination to adorn the new Houses of Parliament with historical fresco paintings, artists were invited to compete for a series of prize designs from which they might be executed, the three highest prizes offered being each three hundred pounds. In 1843 the winners of these and the other prizes, long anxiously looked for and speculated about, were announced; they were Edward Armitage—then in Paris—Charles W. Cope, and G. F. Watts, all young men unknown to fame! The judges were Sir Richard Westmacot, Mr. Richard Cook, and Etty, as artists; Sir Robert Peel, the Marquis of Lansdowne, and Mr. Rogers, as amateurs. The prize awarded to Armitage was suspiciously withdrawn when it was known that he was in the

studio of Paul Delaroche, and had executed it in Paris, but it was restored on his making another cartoon of equal merit in England. Not the least feather in the caps of these gallant young victors was the fact that they had snatched their honours from competing Royal Academicicians.

The subject selected by Mr. Watts for his prize cartoon was "Caractacus led in Triumph through the Streets of Rome," which the *Athenæum* cavilled at, in the spirit of either false pride or false shame, as nationally humiliating, suggesting that one more gratifying to our English pride than that of a "chained savage led in humiliating procession by his victors" might readily have been selected. A charge more solid brought against young Watts was that of having produced too striking a remembrance of Sir Joshua Reynolds' "Ugolina" in the principal character, and not less unmistakeable reminiscences of Raphael, and of Annibal Carracci's "Triumph of Bacchus" in the Farnese Palace. "But," said the *Athenæum*, "as these reminiscences show taste and reading, they therefore bind us over to respect and 'good construction.'" "No competition," said that journal, "could have been conducted with a more earnest desire to give fair play to all, and, to ensure justice, every step in the proceedings of the committee appear to have been well conducted." Some thousands of pounds were afterwards collected in shillings paid to see the prize cartoons, and these were very fairly distributed amongst the prize winners. In 1840 Watts exhibited at the R.A. "Isabella finding Lorenzo Dead." To study the old Itilian masters in their native haunts, Mr. Watts went to Italy, and while at Florence resided on terms of intimacy and friendship with Lord Holland, then ambassadorial *attaché*. He actively pursued his studies in that country from 1844 to 1846, steadily pursuing the course he had marked out for himself from the first. He refused to recognise in art such changeful and capricious fashion as reigns predominant in the world of female dress. Neither the powerful eloquence of a young and fiery enthusiast, Ruskin, nor the examples of his equally enthusiastic followers, could make him waver in his allegiance to the mighty men of old; and the fiercest attacks upon his exemplars only moved him to more vigorous efforts in the practice he had based upon their study. He had the deepest sympathy for aspirations closely akin to his own in the works of one of the non-successful cartoon competitors, poor Haydon, and wrote of them as in "expression of anatomy and general perception of form, the best by far that can be found in the English school, and even a direction towards something that can only be found in Phidias."

Returning to England he again entered into competition for the Government prizes offered for cartoons to decorate the House of Lords, and in 1847 the announcement of the result

once more showed him a triumphant competitor. His subject was "Alfred inciting the Saxons to Maritime Enterprise," for which a sum of five hundred pounds was awarded, and which now hangs in one of the committee rooms. In 1848 he exhibited at the R.A. a portrait of Lady Holland and "Orlando Pursuing the Fata Morgana;" in 1849 a figure subject called "Life's Illusions." It was probably about this time that he gave in his name as a candidate for the honour of A.R.A., as Armitage had. He next exhibited another allegorical work called "Time and Oblivion," in which the former was symbolised not in the usual way as an old man, but, to use his own words, "as the type of a stalwart manhood and imperishable youth." With like originality in his "Time and Death," the latter was neither a mysterious male form or a draped skeleton, but a woman in white, ghastly pale, hollow of cheek and sunken of eye. In like way, in his "Angel of Death," a throned female figure personated what is so often called "The King of Terrors."

In 1853 Mr. Watts executed for the Poets' Hall of the Houses of Parliament his "St. George and the Dragon," and in the same year he exhibited his "Good Samaritan," executed for the Manchester Town Hall. About this time he patriotically offered, in the interest of British historical painting, to cover the walls of the Great Hall at the Euston Station with mural paintings, without remuneration. He made the same offer to the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn, for the Great Hall of which he painted "The History of Justice." By way of grateful and graceful recognition the Honourable Society afterwards begged his acceptance, by way of testimonial, of a gold cup containing five hundred pounds. In 1860 appeared in the R.A. his portrait of Miss Alice Prinsep at the piano.

An indefatigable student at all periods of his career, he practised sculpture under Behnes, and steadily increased his form, power and knowledge by giving increased attention to modelling from the antique and from life, rapidly accumulating that which was made manifest to the general public in his bust of Clytie, various monumental works, and in his equestrian statues, on one of which he is now, I am informed, working with all his old energy in the open air. Especially was his power as a sculptor displayed in the colossal equestrian statue of "Hugh Lupus," the great border-keeping Anglo-Norman, which he designed for the front of Eaton Hall, where the Duke of Westminster so often passes his time. This figure is one of grandly simple design, massive in structure and proportion. Clad in the flexible iron links of an olden-time warrior, Hugh looks every inch the soldier and commander; one strong hand holds his steed in momentary check, the other sustains, somewhat inconsistently perhaps, a hawk, since men did not go a-hawking, I presume, in their armour, either in Hugh's time or since.

In 1866-7, when Mr. Watts and Mr. Armitage had for some years ceased to send in their names for nomination or election as Associates, feeling it was humiliating to do so year after year in vain, both were awarded the long-deserved and long-coveted honour. That year the R.A. reformed the system of election, and abolished the previously insisted upon system of soliciting altogether, and giving the Associates at the same time a right they had never had before—that of voting. Under this improved system Mr. Armitage and Mr. Watts, being the first admitted, gave evidence thereon before the Royal Commission appointed to investigate the affairs of the R.A.

Amongst the very large number of portraits and other works of Mr. Watts are the following :—“The Window Seat,” portraits of Lady Margaret Beaumont and her daughter, “Sir Galahad,” “King Pelles’ Daughter Bearing the Vessel of the Sangreal,” “Virginia,” “Ariadne,” “Choosing,” “Esau,” “Thetis,” “The Meeting of Jacob and Esau,” “The Wife of Pygmalion, a Translation from the Greek,” “The Return of the Dove” (which is seen between the branches of an angular-branched dead tree, from which the Deluge has newly retreated), “The Red Cross Knight and Una,” “Orpheus and Eurydice,” “Daphne,” “To all Churches,” a somewhat curious allegorical design, “The Three Goddesses,” “Psyche,” some landscapes, and portraits of Mrs. Percy Wyndham, Mrs. Frederick Myers (the sweet quietude of that calmly reposing face haunts me as I write), Lady Lindsay, Herr Joachim, Dr. Martineau (a face full of deeply-thoughtful expression), Gladstone (full of resolute self-will and self-confidence), Arthur Stanley, Lord Lawrence, Stuart Mill, Carlyle, Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, Taylor, Arnold and Morris. One of his finest works, full of tender expression and sorrowful depth of sentiment, his “Paoli and Francesca,” is still to be seen in his own residence, adjoining that of Thorneycroft in South Kensington, a picture which is in itself sufficient to confer an immortality of fame. In addition to these works, let me mention his “Genius of Greek Poetry,” the inspiration for which was surely gleaned from the Luxembourg “*Illusions Perdues*.”

Mr. Watts is a noble relic of the time “so near and yet so far,” when artists were more frequently seen in their quiet, humble studios than in the flash, whirl, and glitter of fashionable society; when the greed of a commercial spirit was not dominant in art, and the aspirations of its professors were less defiled by a servile spirit of money-grubbing. The young students’ most sympathetic friend and adviser, he yearns to raise their productions above the materialism of art into the more generously glowing and nobly ambitious heights of spiritual power and beauty; for he would fain have them the nation’s benefactors and teachers, not its toy-makers.

A. H. WALL.

TRUE TO THE DEATH; OR, WORTHY OF A BETTER CAUSE.

AN O'ER TRUE TALE OF HYDE PARK CORNER.

HENRY'S soliloquy on the death of Falstaff, "I could have better spared a better man," is a sentiment that, once in my life, I could have spoken as my own. I could have spoken it over William Habberfield—the friend of my boyhood; for he helped me over Westminster bounds, saved me many a flogging—and the trusty servant of my riper years in many a sporting expedition; but withal, the greatest malefactor in all London!

This sad conviction stole over me by degrees from a variety of evidence, which I have only to relate that you all may think so too, and may also understand how such a man could still retain my honest sympathies to the last.

Not very far from where now is Belgrave Square, standing alone among the willow beds and the almost impassable ditches that drained them, stood some sheds and low cottages, marking the site of Habberfield's loathsome trade of boiling down horses and other dead cattle. There was also no small trade done, with the Westminster boys especially, in pigeons, rats, ferrets, terrier dogs, and other live stock, "to teach the young idea how to shoot." The young noblemen and other sporting characters about Tattersall's found Will a useful man, too.

No one supposed that the dogs had ever cost much to Will; but the consciences both of schoolboys and those who should have known better were, in all sporting matters, anything but scrupulous in those days. Indeed, one and all were well aware that they encouraged a man who lived in open defiance of the law, and was known to be the terror of the officers of justice.

On one occasion some of those gentlemen, having ventured on Will's premises, walked back to Bow Street a little faster than they came. For Will kept bears for baiting, expressly to accommodate some of the Hyde Park Corner clique who met at Tattersall's; and one day, just as a party were turning out with dogs for the attack, one espied the police-officers, evidently sent to spoil their sport.

"Take care, Will," said Lord Cotham; "look innocent if you can, for once in your evil life, or they will have a case against you, and no mistake."

"I am ready for them," said Will. "Let them come a little bit nearer, that's all; and you, gentlemen, crowd into this stable

as quick as you can ; the bears know me, and I should be sorry you should run any risk."

No sooner said than done ; and now the two rather long-legged fellows, with the staff of authority in their hands, were evidently coming to visit Mr. William Habberfield, when all of a sudden the cages were opened, and out bounced the bears into the yard, and stood turning and grunting about, not knowing where they were at the first moment. Off went the officers as fast as their long legs would carry them, amidst no little laughter. Then Will secured his bruins and told his friends to prepare for their afternoon's sport.

Here, as on other occasions, Will was not the man to think of consequences. Indeed, it is wonderful how he would literally run the risk of the gallows and make little secret of what he had done.

One day Will said to me, "I've got a bargain that will just suit you, Mr. Natt."

"What's that, Will ?"

"A horse ; very cheap ; only stole him last night ; cropped mane and tail ; his owner would never know him ; I'll answer for it."

This seemed, then—I know better now—but idle boasting ; when he continued —

"As I was coming home last night from Turnham Green I saw a horse and gig standing at a door—a doctor's trap I believe it was—and no one there to mind him. So says I, 'Will, you might as well ride as walk, if you ain't foolish.' Then up I got, whips off home, breaks up the trap, sells the harness, and keeps the horse for a bargain for Mr. Natt."

True as this was, it seemed but braggadocio, for such a crime in those days was certainly a hanging matter.

However, before very long, there was a rumour that made Will Habberfield appear to less advantage—still it was only suspicion, and sporting men are rarely very nice about the character of those who minister to their pleasures, and we are all slow of believing what we should find very inconvenient, if true.

A certain exciseman, commissioned to see to the apparent correctness of Will's return, had been traced nearly as far as Will's big boilers, and never heard of afterwards. The police vowed vengeance at the very first slip that Will should make. All Bow Street declared that Will Habberfield—a man whose name was a terror in the then state of the constabulary—had murdered the exciseman and clapped his body into his boiler. But, as no one could say the man was dead, no charge could be made. Still the story was not forgotten. As usual, it served some for curses loud and deep and others for jokes, and "How about that officer, Will ?" and "Who boiled the exciseman ?" were cant phrases heard very often by our friend, Will Habberfield.

It is a dangerous thing for a man to break the law; but, seeing that the law cannot act of itself, it is yet more dangerous to stir up feelings of personal pique and private vengeance in those who are already duty bound to bring the culprit within its lash. And such was the jeopardy in which Habberfield had lived for years, when he was so daring as to enter on a new and profitable, but a most perilous, venture in passing forged bank notes.

At the time of which I am speaking, paper money by the Bank of England was used to an extent at once mischievous to commerce and a cruel snare and temptation to needy men. Forgery became a trade—notes were so ably executed that on one trial two officials of the Bank of England could not agree as to whether a note produced was a forgery or not. Consequently, they were struck off by the hundred and sold at so much a dozen to the “smashers,” so called, of whom William Habberfield soon became one. Success and security soon makes men bold, and the veil of disguise becomes thinner and thinner, till the eye of justice at last can see through. So, on one unlucky day, Will was in a public house with some notes in his pocket, when two officers entered and made significantly straight towards him. Will in a moment pulled a roll of notes from his pocket, rushed to the fire, with one hand kept the officers at arm's length, while with the other, regardless of the pain, he held the notes in the flames. His very courage proved his ruin. Had he let go the notes they might have been destroyed, but his convulsive grasp saved a portion from the fire, and on the evidence of his burnt hand and burnt notes he was shortly after at the Old Bailey convicted and condemned to die.

“Honest” Will knew that we could not spare so old a friend and so trusty an ally. He sent for me the same evening, and reminded me that the Home Secretary himself had, in days gone by, had the boldest of rats and the sharpest of terriers at Will Habberfield's crib, and would doubtless remember that one good turn deserved another.

There are always noblemen enough about Tattersall's to come at anybody, and I had but to name the thing to find friends in need by numbers. Still, the best terms we could obtain were the usual ones, viz., that if Will would say who sold him the notes, his life should be spared, and a respite of a fortnight was granted for the discovery—that term expired without compliance, the execution would take place—in other words, as they were always hanging in these days, Will Habberfield would be turned off with the next week's batch of the law's unhappy victims.

Accordingly James Grant, who was very fond of the bear baiting, and thought it a pity any man should be hanged for passing a forged one-pound note, set off to Newgate to make Will tell his story, and then to look out for confirmation satisfactory to the Home Office. The same evening, I strolled down to Grant's

chambers to hear how he had got on. Much to my disappointment he reported that Will declared he never would peach against any one, so we must try to make better terms with the government ; but whether we did or not, peach he wouldn't to his dying hour.

This high sense of honour from the walls of Newgate and this downright pluck, only added to our determination that so good a fellow should not be left to die the death of a dog. So I asked Grant what was to be done. "Why," said he, "before I left the gaol I thought I would have a talk with the head turnkey, for he has of course seen a good deal of the gradually undermining influence of the condemned cells. Perriman was the name of the turnkey ; and Perriman said, 'Oh, don't be afraid, sir ; all this is mere brag ; Habberfield is fresh and strong, and full of good victuals and grog at present ; but, now he is condemned, all that is stopped. I have known a man's hair to turn white in a week—so you may expect to see some change in a day or two.'"

We could only hope for the best next day, having sent J. W.—, the brother-in-law of the Home Secretary, to see what he could do. The reply was that all the merchants in London would be crying out if any quarter were given to the passers of forged notes. An example they must have ; but give up the man who forged the notes and they would have some mercy on him who passed them. Two days after I went to Will myself, and the very clang of the keys and the sound of the heavy doors in those long dark and dreary passages made me nervous. I found Will in a yard with about a dozen others, all condemned, and most of them without hope of reprieve. As I drew him away from that piteous group, one man said with a significant look a parting word.

"Did you hear what that man with the fur cap said ?" asked Will.

"No," I replied.

"Mind you never turn nose," were his words. (Nose means tell-tale.)

I said nothing at the moment, but thought that all this looked unpromising, till we were seated alone in the governor's office.

"Now, Will," said I, after a few common-place remarks, "you know what I am come about ; I have made the best terms I can ; it only remains for you to be advised by your friends and to tell me the name of the man who sold the notes, and my solicitor shall make all satisfactory."

Will shook his head and bit his lips and said nothing. Being pressed further, he said—"Now really master,"—he always called me his master—"this is very good of you and the other gentleman, very good indeed, and I should be sorry to disoblige you in any way after all your trouble ; but what can a man do—that is, if he is a man, and deserves the name of a man ?"

"Why, look ye, Will," I said, "as to what a man can do—should

do, you mean—remember you have got a wife and family to consider. Cross the Herring Pond for awhile, and our interest many soon get you back again ; or perhaps you may not go farther than Woolwich, and then you may shortly be happy with your wife and family again.” I saw he winced at this. But he was silent, not sullen, but silent; quite as if he felt for me and my disappointment, and did not like to put his negative in downright words.

The end of all was I left him, as I said, to think about it. Three days of the fourteen were gone, and in three more days I said I would see him again. This was on a Wednesday; on the following Saturday I saw him, and with the same result. Will was pale, and looked thinner, deeper lines marked his features, and I could even see a twitching in his iron nerves; still, by the same kind of stolid silence he respectfully said, “don’t try me.”

The effect all this had on me was wonderful, I could not rest by day, or sleep by night. The damp, disgusting smell, and want of light and air, and all the horrible associations of the place—all that made the visit repulsive to me, all fired me with admiration for the man so bold as to say “I refuse your terms—honour before life—I’ll stay here and die !”

On the following Monday there was a dinner-party at Grant’s. He had asked Cotham and all his set, and said “We’ll make a Habberfield dinner of it, Tatt ; and you must come.”

Well, at dinner, Grant and I, “The two gaol-birds,” as Cotham called us, told our stories, with all that minute detail the company always expects of Newgate stories ; and then Cotham said he had consulted the clerk at Bow street, with whom he had some business, and he desired us to see the solicitor for the prosecution, and to learn from him on what information Habberfield was apprehended ; for, in all probability, the forgers of the notes, having trusted Will too far, thought it high time, as usual, to hang him out of the way, knowing that dead men tell no tales.

On this hint we acted—gained the very information desired—ascertained enough to show that Will was betrayed by the very men he was asked to name ; and armed with that weapon of offence, I proceeded, quite in a sanguine humour, to the cells.

This was on the Wednesday, and on the Saturday following, Will’s party (that is the next batch) would go to the gallows.

I used all my powers of persuasion. I blamed his folly—I entreated—I scolded—I entreated again. He seemed more resolved, rather than less, and I left as I came, utterly astounded and out of heart.

On leaving the cell I said, “Friday evening you will see me for the last time, Will. Do pray think it all over, and do not let your absurd idea about peaching, make you the dupe and the victim of the men who have been your ruin.”

I went away with a heavy heart. The man had stood before me all my life as a being for whom every one must yield. I

called to mind the story of the horse and gig, and did not doubt that there was an instance in which he would rather risk his neck than not have his way; and more and more the conviction grew upon me that if ever man could steadily look and not quail before the tyrant death, that man was William Habberfield. But death, methought, comes so differently in different forms. I could fancy daring death upon the battle-field; but to die by inches—the blood chilled and curdled at the heart in these damp dungeons—to hear St. Sepulchre's clock go ding-dong, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven! through the sleepless watches of the night, and to think that all this slow agony should not make a man confess the name of him who was his ruin; this, indeed, did seem a degree of constancy that required courage more than human.

Friday evening came. Imagine me imprisoned in Will's horrid cell—Will seated on one corner of the bedstead and me beside him—the grated bars, an earthen pitcher and a pan, and one rickety three-legged table, all the furniture.

I sat about an hour, talking and talking, and coming round to the momentous question; but very gradually, because I feared that the one word "no" would strike me to the heart. But—but—you must hear it—the same, silent manner, the same compressed lip, the same dogged posture of the head, most plainly, as before, pronounced that his mind, and so his doom, was fixed. And now the clock struck seven, we had only one farthing candle, that only "makes darkness visible." It threw a pallid light on those four narrow walls, witnesses of so many a poor wretch's night of agony.

The jailor came to the door and rattled his keys, as if to save his saying, "Now, sir, our time is up." I got up, and whispered through the bars to the man—"You will oblige me by not interrupting me for just five minutes, to make one endeavour more."

"And hasn't he split yet, sir?" said the man. "Well, I never! Time is very scarce now. Come, Habberfield, don't be a fool. You know what must be at eight o'clock to-morrow morning; so while I step across the yard, do listen to the gentleman."

"Yes, Will," I said. "This is the last time—will you tell us who sold you the notes? Think—think—before you answer me."

William Habberfield looked thankfully upon me and remained silent for at least three minutes; but his lips were closed. I hardly dared to breathe—but—but—I saw no change—no quiver—no sign of yielding; at length, hearing the heavy foot of the jailor returning along the gallery, I said, "Now, Will; tell us—" Whereupon he looked up, stretched out his strong left arm—his burnt right hand was wrapped in a cloth—then clutched the

back part of his thick and bushy hair, and said, with a giant's energy, "If all these hairs were lives, I would not peach."

His doom was sealed. I could do no more. Then I said, as well as my voice would let me, "Then I must bid you good-bye in this world—but—but—before I go, oblige me—do oblige me, Will—by answering one question—I mean about that officer who was missing; you heard what what was said—Did you boil down that exciseman?"

"Why master," he said, "you don't think I'd do such a thing?"

"Yes, Will—this is a time for nothing but solemn truths—I really think you did boil him. So tell me now the real truth—now didn't you?"

He sat silent, and so I was obliged to leave him. To the last moment he would not say he did not boil him, "and," said Mr. Tattersall,* with an emphasis as if life and death hung on the truth of his verdict—"it is my firm belief that Will Habberfield did boil that exciseman."

The next morning ended the day of this robber, forger, and murderer, no doubt; but yet must we add this, in one sense a true and noble-hearted fellow, who thus showed how it is possible for a man to retain one seeming virtue amidst a thousand crimes.

THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY YEARS IN THE CHURCH."

* The late Mr. Tattersall, whom I heard relate the story.

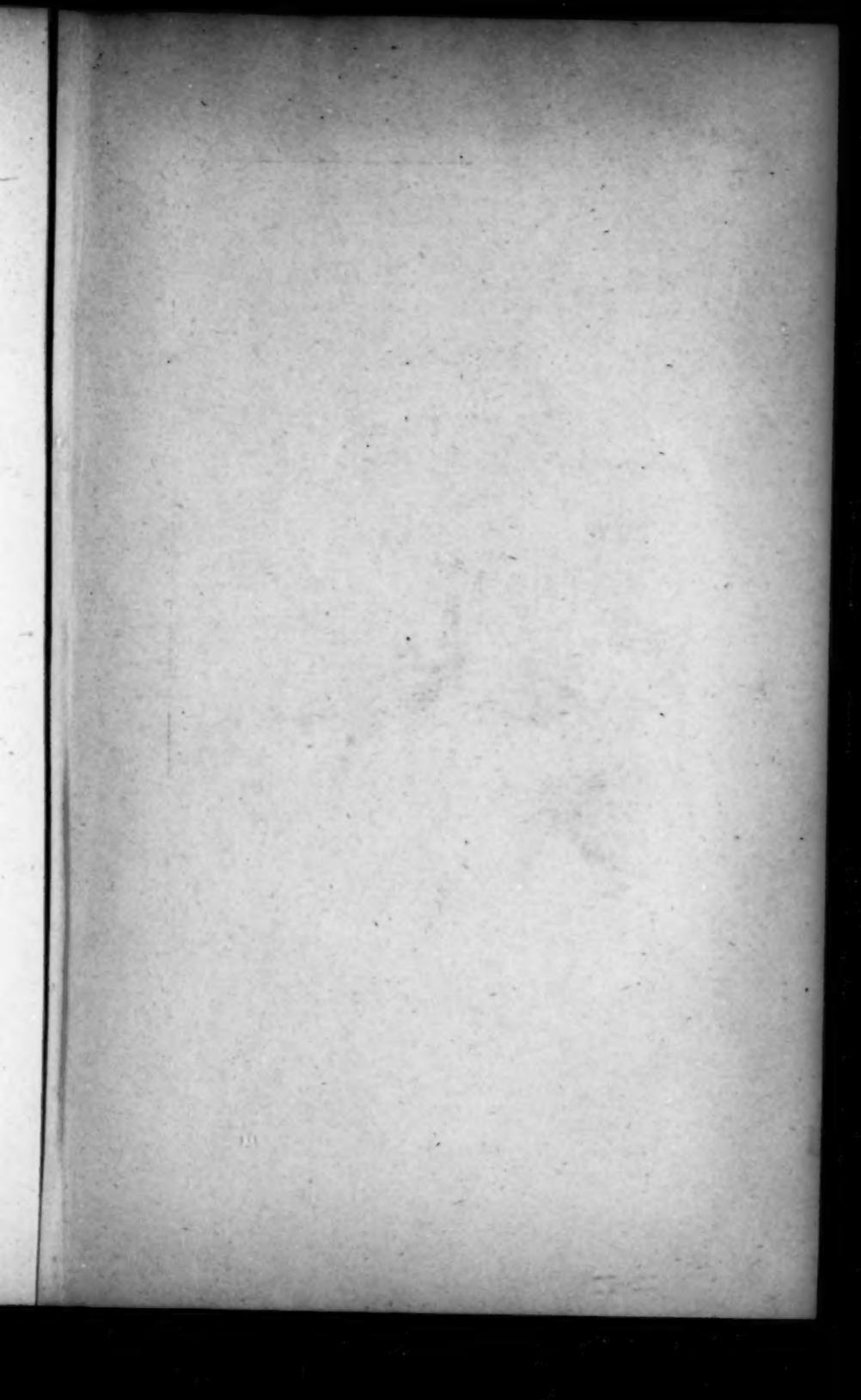
A TÊTE À TÊTE.

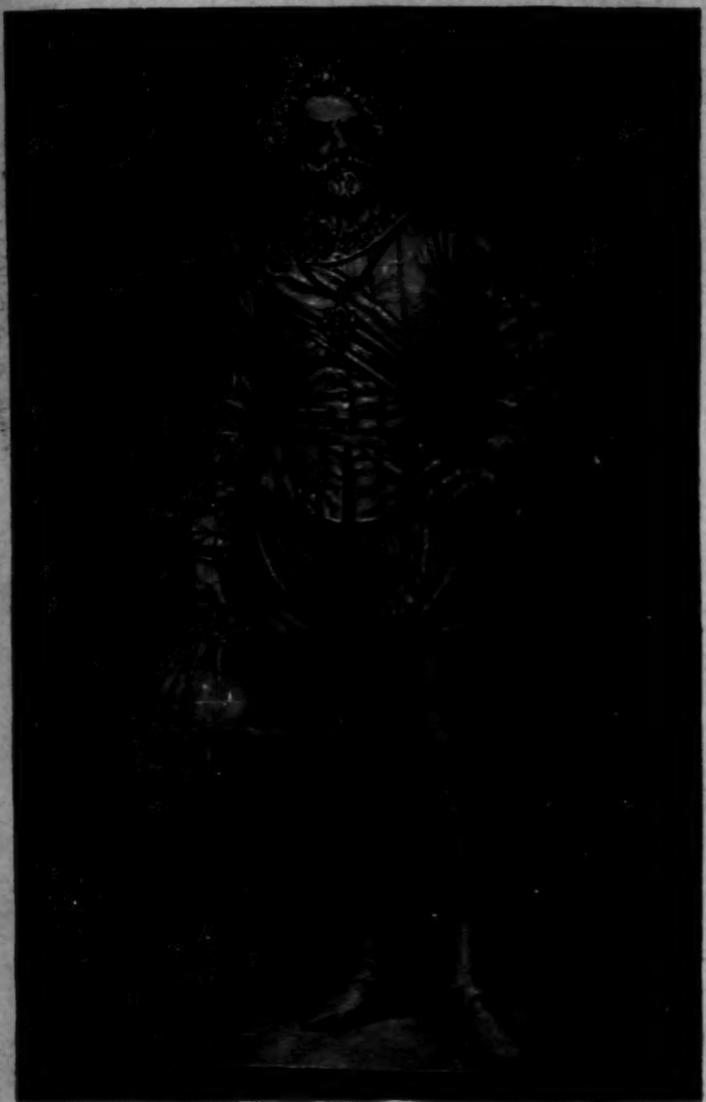
CHRISTMAS EVE, MIDNIGHT.

NELL and I only were awake,
Watching sometimes a sinking fire,
Sometimes an old moon rising higher
Above a distant hill and lake ;
A myriad stars looked on the earth,
And in the pane a sighing wind
Seemed like some echo from our mind ;—
When suddenly a flash of light
Made all the hearth about us bright,
And she, quick leaving where she sat,
Saw a star, fallen from the host,
Touch the far slope a shepherd watched ;
Then, her heart's door by this unlatched,
“Just such a night,” she said, “was that
When Christ was born.”

Awhilst our eyes searched o'er this slope
For a lost track the star had lit,
A multitude half followed it,
And circling toward Heaven again,—
It seemed to our swift moving mind
As if 'twere played by a new wind,—
A changed sweet music in the pane.

E. G. CHARLESWORTH.





BÖEHM'S STATUE OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE,
ERECTED ON PLYMOUTH HORN.

See "A Gossip about Naval Affairs."

LONDON SOCIETY.

FEBRUARY, 1838.

OXFORD MEMORIES.*

BY THE AUTHOR OF "TWENTY YEARS IN THE CHURCH," "AGONY POINT," &c.

SINCE "the boy is father to the man," as says the proverb, to understand the natural history of the full-grown boy at College, we may begin with a few words about the said boy's character at school some fifty years since.

At that time society generally was in a ruder state. Two-bottle men at dinner-parties, good-fellowship measured by the capacity of the stomach and the hardness of the head; prize fights so popular as to be detailed round by round in the "Morning Post;" Tom and Jerry frolics in London and affairs of honour decided by shooting and being shot, on Wimbledon Common—such rough play will give some idea of the social atmosphere in the paternal home in which, fifty years since, boys drew the breath of life.

When school-days commenced, many a boy found himself suddenly launched into a sea of troubles; whether from the bigger boys or from the masters his bill of pains and penalties would be longer, it were hard to tell. Professor Creasy bears witness that the life of an Eton Colleger, in the Long Chamber, was about as hard as that of a cabin-boy on board a ship. As the fate of the fag depended on the character of his senior, naturally it was as bad as might be expected from the rough training this petty tyrant had himself received. Cruelty begat cruelty, and few would believe the misery which in those days any poor, weak and nervous boy has been known to endure. I say weak and nervous, because parents did not then think so much about the constitution, and some boys I knew were as unfitted for so hard a life as a chronic invalid patient for the frozen regions. Pitched battles were common. Six was the smallest number with which I could myself manage. The common course was of this kind—"Thompson, would you take a licking from Jones?" "No." "Well, then, come to the corner after school."

Happily, however, at Eton, about 1825, a decided check was put

* It is proposed to continue these "Memories" throughout the year.